

**Rumba**  
**From Congo To Cape Town**

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I declare that I have composed this thesis by myself, that the work is my own and that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.



## **Abstract**

### **Rumba: From Congo To Cape Town**

The spread of Congolese music and musicians across the African continent since the 1960s is a phenomenon without parallel. How this was achieved has not been given the academic attention it is due. The welcome Congolese musicians received to perform at Independence Day celebrations all over Africa in the early 1960s was a testament to the Pan-African appeal of their music. The perceived modernity, the national coherence, and the danceable quality of their music all contributed to this appeal. The cosmopolitan influences from the African Diaspora, especially those from Latin America, were reunited with their African origins in the Lingala songs and guitar driven melodies of Congolese stars in African Jazz, OK Jazz, and Les Bantous de la Capitale. Their performance skills were allied with the entrepreneurialism of Greek traders who produced and sold their records around Africa. The power of the radio transmitters built by the colonial authorities during World War Two in Leopoldville and Brazzaville meant the music could be heard throughout the continent. In the 1970s Congolese music benefited from state patronage, more investment in broadcasting capacity and the establishment of stadium tour circuits in the regions of Africa where urban populations were seeing unprecedented growth, especially in capital cities. Congolese musicians also settled and became an enduring musical presence in these regions. Congolese musical migrants staffed bands in Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rhodesia, Malawi, Rwanda and Burundi. In the 1980s and 1990s a continual process of innovation by two new generations of musicians in Kinshasa provided fresh impetus for this continental musical presence.

The spread of Congolese musicians and music stopped at the South African border. Under apartheid South Africa was cut off from the popular culture of its neighbours. Since 1994 a steady increase in Congolese migrants has not resulted in the development of a Congolese music scene comparable to that found just North of the border. Instead the fragmentation of South African national popular music and the continued predominance of an African American influence have combined in making South Africa impervious to the attractions of Congolese Rumba. Comparative research on xenophobia now places South Africa at the top of the global league table. Since 1994 the nation-building project and attempts to unify those South African citizens that were divided by apartheid has excluded African migrants from the rest of Africa. Attacks on African migrants in South Africa have steadily increased since 1994 as the flow of people in search of economic opportunities has increased. The contrast between the inclusion of Congolese music and musicians in the national life of East African countries, like Tanzania and Kenya, and their exclusion in South Africa provide us with examples of how different the experience of Diaspora can be depending on how tightly the boundaries of the nation are drawn and the constituents of which the nation is imagined to exist.

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## **Introduction**

### **Rumba on the Wing**

This is the story of a unique phenomenon in Africa. It is the story of how Congolese music first established and then sustained a level of popularity across much of the African continent between the 1950s and the 2000s no other African music ever rivalled. This achievement is remarkable enough in itself, but it was also accomplished in spite of the cultural nationalism that characterised the policies of African leaders in the period after independence.

Cultural nationalism in Africa since independence has not been given the systematic attention it is due. This thesis should help redress that neglect. After independence from Belgium in 1960 the musical nation of the Congolese grew fit and strong.

While their urban dance music became a powerful force for cultural nationalism and provided a new basis for a positive national cultural identity the state assumed the role of a parasitic monster that gradually hollowed out the institutions of its own control. That so many diverse regional and ethnic groups can see themselves as Congolese is due, in part, to their sense that they have a national popular music with which they can positively identify. This positive identification lies in contrast to another unifying but negative element that contributes to a Congolese identity. That is the common experience of suffering at the hands of a dictator and subsequently the collective experience of economic collapse, state implosion and civil war.

Paradoxically that cultural nationalism was successfully fostered by the parasitic state that otherwise gradually undermined its own political and economic viability.

It is a nationalism that appears to have kept a hold of the people within a bounded territory over which the state lost control. The military incursions of its neighbours to the East and South and the civil war of the late 1990s have resulted in a condition of enduring instability and violence in Eastern Congo. Despite this the people of Lubumbashi, in the South East, still throng to the stadium to see the pop stars from Kinshasa.<sup>1</sup> But this thesis is mainly the story of how, since the 1950s, the music of the Congolese has triumphed not just at home but across the African continent. This story involves an exploration of Africa's nationalisms and perceptions of its modernities.<sup>2</sup> The airwaves brought the music of the Congolese to the people of Africa and Congolese musicians followed, setting up musical mission stations in Africa's capitals. The story of Congolese music at home has been well told.<sup>3</sup> What has not been adequately told is the story of this continental triumph and this, in some ways, is the more interesting story.

Zaire became the only African country to achieve sustained continental commercial success for its music in the era since independence.<sup>4</sup> This is a paradox because even during the period of economic buoyancy following independence the economies of other African countries, Nigeria and South Africa most notably, dwarfed that of the

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<sup>1</sup> The biggest star of recent years, Werra Son, has performed four times in Lubumbashi since 2000. Interviewed in Kinshasa 14/09/05

<sup>2</sup> Although Congolese musicians have travelled to North Africa, 'Africa' henceforth refers to Sub-Saharan Africa.

<sup>3</sup> Bemba (1984), Bender 2004, Gondola (1993), Ewens (1994), Jewsiewicki (2003), Kazadi wa Mukuna (1979, 1992, 1999a,b,c), Mpisi (2003), Stewart (2000), Tchebwa (1996), Wheeler 2005, White (1999, 2002, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Although the evolution of Congolese popular music began in both Brazzaville and Leopoldville/Kinshasa, it has been bands from Kinshasa that have dominated its continental spread with one or two notable exceptions – especially the seminal Congo-Brazzaville band *Les Bantous de la Capitale*. However because the music has its origins in both countries 'Congolese music' is a useful way of referring to both, without having to constantly specify which country is being referred to, or swapping between the four names from different periods for Congo-Kinshasa - the Belgian Congo until 1960, former Belgian Congo until 1971, Zaire until 1997 or the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since then. When these names are used it is in order to be more temporally specific.



Congos. However the music of these countries never rivalled the continental appeal of Congolese music.<sup>5</sup> This paradox is all the more striking given the disruption caused by the civil war following independence in 1960 in Zaire, and the collapse of the economy in the late 1970s and of the state itself by the 1990s (O'Ballance 2000; Ndaywel è Nziem 1998; Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002; Young and Turner 1985).

Continental success was achieved in spite of this collapse at home. The second paradox is the development of a strong and cohesive national musical identity during a period of strong separatist politics. This cohesive national musical identity is something that countries with far more stable and coherent states like Kenya and South Africa have not achieved since independence. Elsewhere on the continent divisive identity politics and ethnicity found their cultural expression in popular music.

This leads us to the third paradox that we will explore. The embrace of Congolese music by other African nations occurred after independence in the 1960s when nation building was a conscious objective of many governments. What led presidents from Kenneth Kaunda to Modibo Keita to invite Congolese bands like African Jazz to perform at their independence day celebrations and to invite them to spend long periods of time in Zambia and Mali at the expense of the state in the 1960s (Tabu Ley: Kinshasa 10/08/05)?<sup>6</sup> The fourth and final paradox that needs to be dealt with is how the diaspora of musicians in the 1970s and 1980s, despairing at the state of Zaire, has not led to a decline in their sense of national identity in exile

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<sup>5</sup> A case could be made for Ghanaian Highlife music but only for a relatively short period in the 1960s. See Collins (1994).

<sup>6</sup> Tabu Ley toured with African Jazz at this time and subsequently with his own band. He recounted the story of these long sojourns after independence.

but in fact quite the opposite. These last two paradoxes will be explored in the sections that focus specifically on Congolese music in Kenya and Tanzania. In the final part we will turn to how South Africa has remained stubbornly outside the Congolese rumba zone while its neighbours have been drawn in and the complex reasons for this difference.<sup>7</sup>

Investigating the relationship between Congolese music, its continental market and individual African nations can only be done if a number of over-lapping disciplines are brought together. The cross-fertilisation of history and anthropology that has been underway for some years now amongst Africanists has been an important influence on this work.<sup>8</sup> For an example from political science, take the significance of patronage networks for African politics since independence. This subject has been the object of debate for some years now. Patronage networks also play an important role in the development and continental spread of Congolese music just as they do in national politics within Congo.<sup>9</sup> Chabal and Daloz (2006) have attempted to make the case for an anthropologically informed understanding of politics drawing heavily on Clifford Geertz and the centrality of culture, construed as ‘webs of significance’, to all politics at whatever level. That said they make no particular case for the role of popular culture in this dynamic. The reverse influence of national music and of popular culture more generally on the viability of the national project has only just started to be given any attention (Askew 2002; Tsuruta 2003). This

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<sup>7</sup> ‘Rumba’ is used by the Congolese generically as well as for a specific dance.

<sup>8</sup> This cross fertilisation is too general for one or two references to do it justice. See Piot (1999) for how important this cross fertilisation remains and Jean Comaroff (1985) for a classic and influential example of the influence of history on anthropology. See Coplan (1985) for an example that relates to music. See Chabal (1999) for the influence of anthropology on the study of politics and Vansina (1990), Lonsdale (1992, 2000) and Ranger (1975) on history.

<sup>9</sup> See the work of Bayart (1993) and Bayart, Ellis and Hibou (1999) in their debate with Chabal and Daloz (1999 and 2006).

shift is informed by the development of an understanding of the fluid and unstable performative dimensions to power. However this shift of focus has occurred at the level of the nation, the obvious context for nationalist studies.

What is so interesting about the general spread of Congolese music and musicians in Africa is how the understudied phenomenon of migration and diaspora within Africa, the intra-African diaspora as against the far better studied trans-Atlantic diaspora (Gilroy 1993), has played itself out within the specific and diverse national contexts where the musicians have prospered. There are important musicological factors at work here that pull Central and West Africa into the Congolese musical orbit and these form part of this study (Agawu 2003; Kubik 1999: 101). But the popularity of Congolese music in countries like the Central African Republic, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Botswana outside the region where critical features of the music were prominent before its arrival, make the investigation of other factors necessary to the understand its diffusion. Similarly, to understand why South Africans have failed to warm to the sounds emanating from Kinshasa and Brazzaville, musicological factors do not suffice.

In this study migration and diaspora studies have therefore been significant. Though the diaspora of Congolese musicians has been important for this study it should not be mistaken as a diaspora study *per se*, because the movement of people has been but one factor amongst many in the diffusion of Congolese music. This makes the study different from other diaspora studies, for instance of the marginal social and economic position of Congolese migrants in Europe or West African migrants in the

USA and their trade links back to Africa.<sup>10</sup> It is also different from the studies of population movements and identity formation associated with flight migration from slave raiders (Piot 1999: 40-43 and 2001), the movement of trading groups in Africa like the Lebanese (Van Der Laan 1975) and the Hausa (Abner 1969, Adamu 1978 and Lovejoy 2003) or of refugees like those of the Hutu in Tanzania (Malkki 1995, Sommers 2001) or Sotho migrant workers in South Africa (Murray 1981) or of migrant workers in Africa generally (Cohen *et al* 1995: 159-202). There is relevant material on the flight from instability following independence, the mass expulsion of undocumented migrants and the more recent flight from civil war in many African countries (Adepoju in Cohen *et al.* 1995:166-170) as well as a theoretical literature on cosmopolitanism and Diaspora studies.<sup>11</sup> The scale of migration, flight from violence and instability and forced expulsions by states is greater within Africa since independence than out of Africa. One of the largest of these mass expulsions occurred in 1969 when 500,000 ‘aliens’ were deported from Ghana. 1.5 million migrants were expelled from Nigeria in 1983. Civil war in Liberia produced 500,000 internally displaced persons and 730,000 refugees to neighbouring countries in 1991 amounting in total to half the population. War in Somalia has produced similar figures (Adepoju in Cohen *et al.* 1995: 168-170).

Cultural studies focused on Africa have also been important for this research (Agawu 2003; Barber *et al.* 1997; Barlet in *Africultures*; Bebey 1975; Bender 1991; Deutsch, Probst and Schmidt 2002; Fabian 1978, 1998; Gilroy 1993; Graham 1989; Malm

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<sup>10</sup> See Stoller (2002) on West African migrants in New York and MacGaffey and Bazenguisa-Ganga (2000) and Gandoulou (1989b) on the Congolese in Paris and Brussels.

<sup>11</sup> See the conclusion for works on cosmopolitanism and Part III for relevant diaspora literature. The journal *Diaspora* has been particularly useful for theoretical reflections on the subject.

1993; Manuel 1988; Palmberg and Kirkegaard *et al.* 2002; Roberts 1999; Stapleton and May 1987). Congolese musicians, working in the field of popular culture, are involved in the development of national self-perceptions in a way that commercial traders, displaced refugees and other migrant workers are not (Wekesa 2004). This makes an appreciation of their capacity to adapt to the political as well as economic contexts in which they find themselves just as important. Two national examples have been pursued in this study. Congolese musicians adapted their practices, and their songs, to the very different political and economic circumstances of Tanzania and Kenya after independence and these two countries provide good examples of how that adaptation kept them at the heart of both nations' musical popular culture. The diffusion of Congolese music across Africa has made the use of long-term ethnographic research in one location inappropriate. Site-research in all the regions to which the music has spread has not been possible. Particular choices had to be made that left out important areas of influence most obviously in west and southern Africa north of South Africa. It has been possible to build a general picture from written sources by extracting references to the Congolese presence in writing on particular countries.<sup>12</sup> The archives of EMI and the British Library newspaper archive have provided useful material. The more fruitful source for this general picture however has been lengthy semi-structured interviews conducted with the Congolese musicians responsible for producing the music, especially those stars that have established a continent-wide recognition.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> There are some general works that attempt to cover the whole of Africa that are useful. Bender (1991), Broughton, Elinghman, Lusk (Eds) (2006) Graham (1989), Stapleton and May (1987), Stone and Porter (1998 and 2000), Stone (1998 and 2000).

<sup>13</sup> See appendix 1 for a list of interviewees. Transcripts of these interviews have been lodged in the University of Edinburgh library. See appendix 2 for interviews with musicians. An interview schedule was used to establish a focus on the particular areas of concern but any issue that generated

Interviews with musicians were made easier and more fruitful by the degree of social proximity between my interviewees and myself as a fellow musician. I have been working as a musician for twenty years. I have worked in Mali with Ali Farka Touré, Zani Djiabate and Keletigui, in Senegal with Super Diamono, in Zimbabwe with Biggie Thembo and the Ocean City Band and in South Africa with Zanussi. I joined some of the bands on stage whose members I interviewed for this study in the DRC, Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa. This shared musical language meant that a degree of rapport was possible to establish during performances. Interviews were easier to organise after such performances than in their absence.<sup>14</sup> This goes some of the way to achieving the kind of social proximity Bourdieu believes is necessary to avoid interviewing without the risks of the violence of objectification (Bourdieu *et al* 1999: 611). Bourdieu usefully cautions against a belief that reflexivity alone can insulate the interviewer against the tendency to objectify interviewees. ‘It should not be thought that, simply by virtue of reflexivity, the sociologist can ever completely control the multiple and complex effects of the interview relationship,’ (Bourdieu 1999: 615). Nonetheless a commitment to the practice of reflexivity is necessary if not sufficient, I would suggest, in aiming to avoid objectification. In this research the attempt was made to sustain a degree of reflexivity in part by recording interviews. This allows the researcher to examine their own interviewing practice and also allows the possibility of giving more room to the voices of those

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interest was pursued and schedules adapted to research on individuals. This methodology would be usefully supplemented in future research by a collaborative project with African musicians, academics and journalists to investigate the connections between popular culture and nationalism more generally.

<sup>14</sup> I have now worked with two bands in Scotland, La Boum! and the Peatbog Faeries for seven years.

interviewed even if mediated by the questioning and choices made by the researcher.<sup>15</sup>

Given my musical experience and my subject position as a musician I considered the most constructive use of the limited time I had available in each of the research sites was primarily, though not exclusively, in interviewing fellow musicians, as well as radio and recording industry workers. I recognised how much more comfortable I am in talking to fellow musicians on first meeting for the reasons laid out by Bourdieu. I also made this decision given my view of the primacy of the Congolese musicians creations and their channels of diffusion over the diversity of the audiences in Africa. That said, this decision was not made because audiences are not still important for the spread of Congolese music and I did conduct interviews with audience members that were important for this research. This did not amount to the kind of in depth qualitative and quantitative research that would still be desirable. Such work was however beyond the time constraints and resources at my disposal. Barber (1997a) writes of how important and under-researched audiences are in Africa. But she also writes (1997b) how difficult such research is and how for her, working on popular theatre in Nigeria, it was dependent on many years of familiarization with a single urban community where the theatre troupe she worked

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<sup>15</sup> Reasons of space make the inclusion of full transcripts impossible in this work. As an inspiring example of how the inclusion of full transcripts gives voice to the interpretive world of interviewees see Bourdieu et al. (1999). The book runs to over 600 pages as a consequence. The literature on interviewing practice that has influenced this study includes work on creative interviewing (Douglas 1985), in depth interviewing (Chirban 1996), active interviewing (Holstein and Gubrum 1995) and dialogic interviewing (Dwyer 1982). For the place of interviewing in research design see Bechhoffer 2000.

with happened to perform.<sup>16</sup> This level of familiarization was not possible for me given the multi-site nature of the research.

Another significant field I have not given direct and extensive attention is the translation and interrogation of Congolese song texts. As with audience research, textual analysis is important work. Its omission is due first to the significant treatments it has been given elsewhere. Olema (1984) has focused on the most prominent of themes in Congolese urban dance band song lyrics - the representation of women, romance and family and their relationship to money, alcohol and nightlife in the city by the predominantly male lyricists. Gondola (1993,1997) has also looked at how important gender relations in Congolese song lyrics have been for fashioning and reflecting the evolution of urban identities. This is closely related to a secondary theme, *ambiance*, the subject of close attention in song lyrics by Biaya (1996).<sup>17</sup> Tchewwa (1996: 251- 323) has provided a survey of the major themes to be found in Congolese popular song lyrics. Perhaps tellingly the majority of the themes he identifies are iterations of the gender dynamic, the interplay of love and money - *argent-amour-femme, femme et argent, mariage, charme féminin, l'amour et le couer, prostitution, l'homme-argent-femme, amour-passion, beauté féminine*. He, like Baiya also identifies the *ambiance* of Kinshasa as the *ville plaisir*, its lure and its dangers and how people survive or succumb to them, as parrallel and dominant themes to those surrounding gender. The nature and demands of life in Kinshasa, as

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<sup>16</sup> 'Investigating the audience is difficult when constantly moving from place to place and when the show is late and people just want to go home after a show. Barber was lucky to perform a show in a town where she did field work so knew people well in the audience who she could interview the next day about their interpretations of the play. "There were many people in the audience I had known for years"' (1997b:xvi)

<sup>17</sup> See appendix 9 for more on *ambiance* and a translation of a song on the subject.



well as Kinshasa itself alongside Brazaville, as the places where musicians reside have provided prominent themes in the music made there. Lyrical reflections on religious belief, suffering and death are also covered.<sup>18</sup> Kazadi (1992:79) quotes, Comhaire-Sylvain, a musician from the 1940s and 1950s, listing the most common subjects of songs as being ‘love and relationships between the sexes, difficulties of urban life (living in a colonial state), ethics, death and dancing. Frequently musicians were contracted to advertise a particular product’. Only after independence did musicians start to be employed to sing for political parties and personalities. Oppositional or independent politics, especially under President Mobutu, remained an arena too dangerous for lyricists to engage in openly or frequently, for reasons we will come to. This meant that hidden meanings, allegories and metaphors in songs became the subject of intense speculation amongst Congolese audiences, as well as scrutiny by the authorities, during Mobutu’s dictatorship. This was especially true for the dominant artists of Mobutu’s era, Franco Makiadi and Tabu Ley, both of whom found themselves arrested on suspicion of such coded messages.<sup>19</sup> The song lyrics of these two artists have been given extensive treatment in two biographies (Ewens 1994, Mpisi 2003). Wheeler (2005) has attempted to draw out the political implications before independence of the themes that predominated in Congolese song, especially romance.<sup>20</sup> He uses an analysis of some of the best-known songs of the pre-independence era to this end.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> For a translation of a portion of one of the most momentous and poetic of songs on the subject of religion, racism and suffering see the CD notes for CD 2 track 8 *Nakomitunaka* ‘I ask myself’ p.656.

<sup>19</sup> See pp.35-60 for more on the lives and lyrical subjects of these two artists.

<sup>20</sup> Wheeler explores the way in which the Congolese appropriated and identified with the cultural achievements of black Americans and Caribbeans through the use of the word Jazz in band names and Rumba Lingala to identify their music.

<sup>21</sup> Listen to tracks 1 and 7 on CD 1 for two different versions of one of these songs from 1948 and 1958.

In *Noko Akomi Mobali* (The uncle becomes a boyfriend), by Adikwa for the Loningisa record label, Wheeler also brings out the element of moralising, or the kind of moral message to be found in many of these romantic songs. These songs often take the form of condensed soap operas. In the seminal song *Marie-Louise*, by Wendo Kolosoy and Henri Bowane, Wheeler sees the story of love thwarted by in-laws and strategies to overcome them, as an allegory for the Congolese desire for independence and the response to being thwarted by colonial authorities in that desire. 'The allegorical style was probably chosen to reduce the likelihood of retribution... It is also more appropriate in situations where power is oppressive and vigilant, striking down any resistance...Nor can an ambiguous message be co-opted'. (Wheeler 2005)

White (1999) focuses on the role and lyrics of the *atalaku*, who, since the late 1980s, have added shouted cries of animation and long streams of semi-improvised lyrics between the more formally composed words of songs. White focuses on the increasing preponderance of the commercially motivated naming of paying customers in song and by the *atalaku*. Matocot (2001) has traced how the pre-occupation with romance was replaced by a pre-occupation with war in the 1990s as conflict afflicted both Congos. He sees this reflected in the scarcity of songs named after and about women in the 1990s and the prevalence of album and song titles that speak of war, *Tempête du désert*, *Ultimatum*, *Embargo*, *Attentat* (Attack)', *Poison*, *Arme Ultime*, *Pentagone*, *Panique Totale*. The prominent and more aggressive role of the *atalaku* is something Matocot sees as part of this shift of emphasis. Combat gear also became a popular new stage outfit. Matocot sees the search for peace in the late

1990s as an important new theme that is replacing reflections on war. There is also good work on the lyrics of the most important of Congolese expatriate musicians in Tanzania by Graebner (1992a, 2000b). Graebner has made a particular study of the work of the Congolese musician Remmy Ongala who has made his career in Tanzania (1997). Ongala was clear to me that he considers himself to have been far freer during his career in Tanzania to write songs of social and political commentary, songs about aids, democracy and corruption about which Bender (2006) writes, than he ever would have been under Mobutu in Zaire, even though he faced the insecurity of being a foreigner in Tanzania (Interviewed in Dar es Salaam 07/03/02).

The main reason for not giving song texts close attention is not only that they have already been given the attention outlined above. It is more because such attention would not speak to my main concern – tracing the spread of Congolese music in the rest of the continent, barring South Africa, and the reasons behind that spread. The themes that have predominated in Congolese song lyrics, while no doubt both reflecting and forming the Congolese historical experience over the last fifty years, have not been significant in this regard. Lingala is not spoken as a native language outside of the two Congolese nations, making little beyond song titles in French, or a female or male name in those titles, comprehensible or significant for most African audiences. The only way in which such song texts maybe significant is in building a shared national Congolese tradition of popular song and this requires further investigation, though exactly how the range of predominant themes mentioned, or individual texts might have done this is only occasionally very clear. When such cases have presented themselves, as for instance is the case with the song

*Independence Cha Cha Cha*, I have tried to mention them (See pp. 43,104). More important than the range of themes and poetic content chosen by artists for the establishment of this national voice, has been the choice of Lingala in which to voice it. This is a subject I have given significant analysis (See Chapter 5 section 1).

Turning to a theorist from within a relevant academic fraternity for this study, musicology, Agawu argues along the same lines as Bourdieu (Agawu 1995; 2003). Agawu attacks ‘metropolitan’ Africanist ethnomusicologists and any others from within the Western academy who attempt representations of music in Africa (partly for the use of the ‘ethno’ in ethnomusicology). He does this first for their supposed collective failure to address the issue of the power relationship between Western researchers and Africans, or to accord those African ‘informants’ the status of potential or actual theorists. Second for the tendency that has flowed from this inattention to ‘other’, homogenise and essentialise in their representations of ‘African music’. He sees this also amongst those Africans that have internalised the Western discourse of essentialist difference. ‘Only if we proceed from a premise of sameness and grant difference in the unique expression of sameness are we likely to see the true similarities and differences between “African” and “Western” music’ (Agawu 2003:112). The conclusion he draws, like Bourdieu, is that it is Africans who are best able to avoid these corrupting effects of history he sees in the work of Western academic representations, and it is Africans, therefore, who must now endeavour to conduct their own research if self-representation is to be created, freed of these colonial and neo-colonial distortions. From this premise Agawu makes a strong case for a formal musicological analysis of African music, using staff notation

for transcription for instance, being as useful and applicable as with any other music in the world. This is a very bald outline of Agawu's argument.

I would make three points about this argument. It is only the power relation between Africa and Euro-America that he takes as a fundamental problem for representation and this tends to throw all other power relations into the epistemological shadows, the most salient being that between any academic, whether African or not, and those they research.

I would make just two other points. Even Bourdieu cannot present us with a relationship that does not involve power relations. In suggesting that say a mathematician or Algerian immigrant in France are the people best placed to study their 'own groups' he has not presented us with relationships that do not involve the distorting effects of power relations - as members of any academic community or mathematicians would probably attest. As Agawu says he has experienced the need to deceive to survive in the 'viciously competitive academic world of the United States' (2003: 212). Even at the level say of brothers or sisters there are, I would suggest, power relations that would have critical effects on any attempts at social enquiry. So in order to pursue research that makes any claims to a critical or scientific status the academic task has to be confronting how to manage the consequences of the power relations that cannot be avoided, both practically and epistemologically. The issue cannot be done away with, in the manner suggested by Bourdieu and Agawu, through membership of a social group. In any case the issue in this study has as often been about the superior status and power of the musicians I

have been interviewing as it has my power or status. This is especially true of their access to the most powerful media of self-representation (radio, television, newspapers), media far more powerful, I would suggest, than the academic book or journal, in their social impact in Africa or the West. The issue of the critical or scientific status of such self-representation is a separate one from the power of the media in which the representation resides. Again as Agawu says ‘the Western researcher might be irrelevant to the non-West...ethnomusicology is a discipline of the West for the West by the West’ (Agawu 2003: 203). Secondly in the case of Agawu’s argument, as he himself admits, ‘Scholarly practice is enabled by a set of material conditions’ (1995: 113) and he details how those material conditions are lacking in Africa (2003:32-35). He goes on to say that unless those conditions change ‘productive scholarship, it would seem, cannot be done on the African continent, or in African libraries and archives at the present time’. Agawu favours ‘the one solution that has not yet been tried: direct empowerment of post-colonial African subjects so that they *can* represent themselves’ (Agawu 1995: 113). In the absence of the economic and political transformation of Africa that would make the funding of a functioning higher education system across the continent possible what this ‘direct empowerment’ might mean remains unclear. At no point does Agawu engage with how those necessary material conditions might come into being. In the mean time the only places where adequately funded academic production is possible, as Agawu says, remain in those wealthy powerful parts of the world that can finance that production. It is to one such place in North America that Agawu has himself migrated. South Africa is exceptional in this regard. Elsewhere on the continent academic standards and productivity tend to be constrained by the financial and

institutional impediments Agawu describes. Despite this, these limiting factors should not be allowed to permit the wholesale dismissal of all academic production from within African universities, given that they do have the advantage Agawu describes, as far as one critical axis of power is concerned, over those in the West.

Many important Congolese musicians began to base themselves in Europe in the 1980s, in Britain, France and Belgium. Here interviews were conducted with for instance Kanda Bongo Man, Sam Mangwana, Wuta Mayi and Dizzy Mandjeku.

Research in Kinshasa and Brazzaville gave me the opportunity to interview some of the most influential characters in the continental spread of the music – most notably Franco’s manager Manzenza, Mobhe Lisuku Jhomos (the manager of the Thu Zaïna, Sosoliso and Le Trio Madjesi), as well as the musicians Jean Serge Essous, ‘Roitelet’, ‘Brazzos’, Tabu Ley Rochereau, Verckys and Werra Son.<sup>22</sup> Agents, managers, radio presenters, journalists, DJ’s and record companies as well as fans of the music were all important informants but given my social proximity as a fellow musician, as well as resource and time constraints, musicians have been my most numerous and informative interviewees. To supplement this general picture of national development and continental diffusion of the music, work in four other specific sites, where Congolese musicians have settled, was conducted. The first two sites were Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. Both these cities have provided popular destinations for touring Congolese stars as well as havens for Congolese musicians that have settled permanently and established local bands. These musicians were the interviewees who told the stories of how they came to leave their homes and

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<sup>22</sup> The names used here are those by which the musicians are best known and not their full names. J.B.Mpiana was interviewed in South Africa and Madilu in Tanzania.

establish themselves within the context of the national popular music of Tanzania and Kenya in the years since independence. The second two sites have been Johannesburg and Cape Town, to which many Congolese migrants and musicians have moved since 1990. The basic research method has thus involved tracking down musicians in Europe and multi-site research in the six African cities mentioned.

The factors that have produced the continental triumph of Congolese rumba are the basis of the first part. The first of these factors is the enduring creativity of Congolese musicians. The second is the timing of its first flowering in the 1950s in the period immediately prior to independence. It is in part how the music developed its cohesiveness at home that explains the paradox of its pan-continental success.

Chapter one plots the history of how that musical cohesion was created by the musicians. That musical cohesion meant the Congolese sound was internationally recognisable, but alongside that coherence the music also went through a process of change that is characterised by the Congolese in terms of four musical generations. Each new generation has provided a fresh impetus to the spread and continuing popularity of Congolese music since the 1950s. The second section of the first chapter tells a story that has not been given adequate attention in explaining the spread of the music. This is the extensive continental touring of the stars of these four generations and an overview of the extent of the influence and spread of Congolese music in Africa since World War II, tracing the journey the music and musicians have made over the land, over the airwaves and into the record shops of Africa.



This leads to the second chapter and how the political and economic history of Congo has nurtured the success of its musical progeny for export. The first section in this chapter deals with how the touring of the bands began in Congo itself. The drive and skills necessary for international touring were first acquired within this vast area. The first tours were made possible by the transport infrastructure, of regular riverboats, a railway and road network, and aerodromes and runways built during colonial rule. The Belgians also sponsored the touring of the musicians of the first generation. In the second section we look at how the colonists also played a role in the development of Congolese vocal talent through the creation of Church choirs and their importation of European secular music, especially that of the Corsican tenor Tino Rossi. In the third section we look at how the relationship to the state for Congolese musicians strengthened after independence. In the early 1960s the centrifugal secessionist forces within Congolese society had the opposite effect on the evolution of Congolese music than might have been expected. On the one hand musicians escaped from the violence in the regions and gravitated to musical opportunities developing in the capital thus strengthening its central role in the coherence of the music. On the other hand musicians escaped by emigrating to neighbouring countries thus strengthening the music abroad.

In the fourth and fifth sections we look at how the establishment of Mobutu's dictatorship in 1965 contributed to the continental good fortunes of the most established musicians as he formed a close and mutually beneficial relationship with them. This added to their status and gave them the political cover and financial resources for their domestic and international touring. Another policy that fed into

the continued vitality of Congolese music was the ‘recourse to authenticity’ of the early 1970s. This was a policy that strengthened the relationship of the music to the indigenous national musical heritage while never meaning this relationship became antipathetic to the continued inclusion of diasporic cosmopolitan influences. These influences were by no means exclusively Latin. European pop music, variety and jazz were all incorporated as well as North American influences. This influence arrived most notably in the form of the seminal figure James Brown, who was first invited to the country in 1972.

In chapter three we turn to a set of general factors that play an important but neglected role. These are related to how other Africans have become susceptible to the charms of Congolese rumba and how the differences in the cultural policies of the different colonisers and post-independence rulers have contributed to that susceptibility. Given that Congolese popular music is closely identified with what it means to be urban in Africa, Africa’s urbanisation has been important for the spread of the music. The urbanisation process has been accompanied by a steady increase in national populations and the concentration of the urban population in capital cities. This has increased the size and the accessibility of those to whom the music is marketed and performed, especially through gigs in the increasing number of stadiums in Africa. The second section in this chapter addresses another neglected factor – the way in which French cultural policy appears to have discouraged the development of urban dance music in French West Africa prior to independence. The geographic and social location of Kampala and Nairobi had the same effect in East Africa. The absence of strong musical competitors at independence in these

countries meant the markets in Uganda, Kenya, Senegal, Mali, Cameroon, Gabon, Togo and the Ivory Coast were open to the Congolese in the 1960s.<sup>23</sup> By contrast the Highlife urban dance music that developed under the British in the Gold Coast acted as an effective local competitor when Congolese music arrived. Policies to support urban dance music in Guinea and Mali after independence helped in the development of strong local competitors. These policies were in part aimed at achieving the national character and appeal that Congolese urban music enjoyed in Congo for Malian and Guinean music in Mali and Guinea. In chapter four we turn to a set of factors related to the music business, some of which are better addressed than others in the literature. The first of these is the important but neglected role of the new heads of state in Africa in the 1960s in inviting Congolese musicians to national celebrations, especially at independence. The second is the role of promoters and managers that started working with the musicians when such state sponsorship declined in the 1970s. The second section deals with the crucial role of radio and television in spreading the music after World War Two. The role of the powerful transmitters installed by the Belgians and French during the war in Leopoldville and Brazzaville is better covered in the literature. What is neglected is the role played by Mobutu in the continuation and huge increases in that investment in broadcasting in the late 1960s. This acted both to perpetuate the continental presence of Congolese music over the airwaves but also consolidated the centrality of Mobutu, Kinshasa and Lingala in the national imagination within the country. In the third section the important role of Greek and Jewish entrepreneurs in the spread of the music in Africa before independence is covered. These entrepreneurs built the first studios in

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<sup>23</sup> It is not possible to deal with every country individually. The case of Zambia is interesting because of its unique level of industrialisation as well as urbanisation but the lack of any powerful challenge from indigenous urban dance music to the Congolese after independence (Ferguson 1999).

Leopoldville in the late 1940s, pressed shellac records in Europe and distributed them in Africa. In the 1960s Congolese musicians developed relationships with the Belgian record company Fonior as well as the majors of the international record industry. These relationships facilitated the continuing spread of the music in Africa on new less brittle vinyl records when the Greeks departed. As with radio this era is well documented. What is less well documented is the role of Congolese entrepreneurs in the pressing and distribution of records in Africa – especially by two particular individuals in the 1970s and 1980s.

In chapter 5 we turn to a set of factors that are perhaps less obvious than the work of the musicians and the business in explaining the paradoxes of Congolese musical success - what it was about the music and the musicians that made them so musically seductive to other Africans. The first factor is the role of Lingala as a national language in the music. Both the Belgians and Mobutu contributed substantially to the national status Lingala has achieved. The exceptional nature of this development in Africa is rarely commented on. Wolof in Senegal and Swahili in Tanzania provide rare comparable examples of African languages that are properly national.<sup>24</sup> Congolese music has been strengthened by this national cohesion for continental export and played no small part in contributing to that cohesion. Mobutu's dictatorial excesses can easily distract our attention from this linguistic legacy. The attraction of Lingala as a sung language outside the countries where it is understood is also dealt with here as a contributory factor. The second section focuses on how the parallel development of dance has contributed to the continental fortunes of the

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<sup>24</sup> This is not a process that is by any means uncontested. Listen for instance to Baaba Maal from northern Senegal singing in Pulaar.

music, at first through stage shows and subsequently, in the 1980s, with the advent of video clips, on television. The contribution of dance to the popularity of the music is often neglected, both in attracting people to the music to watch and in the power of the music to induce the participation of its African audiences onto the dance floor. As the musician Abdul Tee Jay from Sierra Leone commented, Africans would never have embraced the music in the way they did if had not been so infectiously danceable.<sup>25</sup> In fact it is by specific dances that became generic that Congolese music is often known - rumba, *soukous*, *kwassa kwassa* and *ndombolo* and, as with the music, generational continuity and change provides an important source for maintaining the attraction of the music as people have tried to learn the latest steps emanating from Kinshasa.<sup>26</sup> The way in which the dances have become more sexually explicit over the years also appears to have contributed to their popularity.

Closely associated with the rise of dance to prominence has been the role of fashion, culminating in the cult of the *sapeurs* in the 1980s. The *sapeurs* were predominantly young men who vied with each other in the acquisition and public display of expensive European and Japanese designer clothes. Papa Wemba and his band Viva La Musica were at the forefront of the movement. This section assesses the influence the intense relationship of Congolese musicians with fashion has had in the continental spread of the music. The significance of the inspiration and domestication of Latin and Caribbean music is addressed to conclude the chapter.

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<sup>25</sup> Abdul Tee Jay interviewed on BBC Documentary Episode 4: Cathcart (2006) That said, Agawu (2003: 149) usefully cautions that in Africa popular music 'is, finally, a contemplative art' however closely associated it is with dance because its primary appeal and means of dissemination has been to listeners through recordings. Why the word 'finally' has to be used rather than say 'firstly' or even 'both' is not clear.

<sup>26</sup> See attached DVD for a documentary based on my research made in Kinshasa on the four generations of dance.

The role of less well-known bands that emigrated and settled in the countries that surround the Congo after independence in the 1960s is addressed in part II. How they adapted to the different demands of two particular countries, Tanzania and Kenya, is the focus here because these two countries provide an elucidating contrast with each other. Nairobi did not develop a strong urban dance music as a national competitor to Congolese rumba in the 1950s. This situation was compounded by the absence of a supportive cultural policy or state patronage for national urban dance music by Kenyatta. The Congolese made good use of the space this left open for their music. The contrast with Tanzania is striking. Here there was a strong local competitor, *dansi*, that made use of similar indigenous and Latin musical inspiration to be heard in Congolese dance music in the 1950s. This music built on the *beni ngoma* heritage (Ranger 1975). After independence Nyerere pursued a cultural policy of linguistic nationalism and state patronage for Tanzanian *dansi* bands. How the Congolese managed nonetheless to become an important, even at times dominant force, in Tanzanian music in spite of this is the subject of the second chapter in part II.

In part III the over-arching context that is the subject of musicology is broached. Here the seminal work of Gerhard Kubik (1999) stands out as the most useful contribution to my argument. This work acts as a bridge to the counter-factual case of South Africa. Kubik has attempted to provide an explanatory framework for the historical relationship and linkages between common musical traits in a core region of West Africa and North American blues. He goes beyond this though to identify

musical traits that are prominent in Latin music, in particular the asymmetric time line pattern (the classic 3:2 clave rhythm of Cuban son), and the region in Africa with which it has this trait in common. This region spreads out across Central Africa down to Angola, Zambia, Malawi and northern Mozambique and all along the West African coast as far as Sierra Leone (Kubik 1999: 101). This is the region from which slaves were taken to Latin America and the Caribbean. So the argument follows that this trait in Latin American music was familiar to Africans from this region when it returned home. It also coincides with those countries to which Congolese music has spread. This musicological version of Paul Gilroy's (1993) work on the Black Atlantic does not stop there. Kubik goes on to make the case that although South Africa is not in a region from which slaves were taken to the Americas it is within a region in which traits common to blues are curiously present and this helps account for the attraction of North American over Latin American music in that country in the twentieth century. This thesis is important for understanding the spread of Congolese music in Africa and its absence from South Africa but it is not the whole story. For instance it does not account for the popularity of Congolese music in Mali, Senegal, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Kenya all of which lie outside the region Kubik identifies with the predominance of the asymmetric time line pattern and in which the music has been welcomed. For these regions, as elsewhere, the series of interlocking factors already discussed must be given their due weight, especially the diaspora of Congolese musicians. This section concludes with a discussion of some contrasts in the experience of diaspora for Africans in the Atlantic diaspora and those in the intra-African diaspora. This involves a theorisation, following Gilroy's idea of 'double consciousness', of a

Congolese ‘triple consciousness’. This is a triple consciousness constituted first by the return to Africa of the cultures generated in the Black Atlantic diaspora, second by the continuities in African culture and consciousness and third a European consciousness. The European consciousness is that which the forces of colonialism, neo-colonialism and the continuing globalisation of Euro-America have generated. Though these ‘three’ are enmeshed with each other they are distinguishable, at least at the level of the geographical location of their historical development.

In the case of South Africa a set of factors, in addition to the musicological factors, are also needed in order to understand the exclusion of Congolese and other African music. The role of apartheid in dividing by race and ethnicity has left a legacy of a highly fragmented society and musical culture. Those divisions were reinforced by radio broadcasting policy under apartheid. The historical aberration in African terms of urbanisation with industrialisation (and institutionalisation) has fostered class and age divisions in South Africa and these divisions have compounded the divisions fostered by apartheid.<sup>27</sup> In the absence of the dominance of formal white and blue collar employment and of the concentrations of capital associated with industrialisation and institutionalisation what might be called ‘class’ remains profoundly different in other African countries. The fragmented musical landscape in South Africa stands in sharp contrast to the cohesive urban music of the Congo. The complex response of musicians to the uses made by the apartheid regime of South Africa’s musical heritage have continued to play themselves out since 1994. American popular music and culture has largely blotted out the influence of any

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<sup>27</sup> While the whole continent has experienced urbanisation no other country in Africa has been through a comparable and enduring industrialisation. Zambia’s rapid industrialisation in the era of independence ground to a halt by the late 1970s (Ferguson 1999: 9-12).



musical culture from north of the border. This has not changed significantly since 1994. The commitment to the free market in South Africa since 1994 favours the might of the American culture industries, while the imposition of a minimum quota for local content on television and radio favours South African music. The cultural nationalism of the ANC embodied in this quota policy, and discussed in this section, appears to be strengthening the cultural barrier at the border. Between these two forces Congolese and other African music are squeezed out. Since 1994, in South Africa, important and new factors have also contributed to this exclusion. These factors are the rise of a virulent form of xenophobia towards black Africans from outside South Africa and the evolution of an exclusionary South African nationalism. Xenophobia and exclusionary nationalism have made the establishment of Congolese nightclubs in South Africa extremely difficult.

The spread of Congolese music in Africa has counteracted the general tendency for African American and Latin American music to dominate as the primary external influences and sources of inspiration on individual African countries. Certainly the music of no other African country has achieved a comparable level of popularity. The only competitor for this title is Ghanaian and Nigerian Highlife. Highlife achieved a degree of popularity outside its birthplace, as did South African jazz in the 1950s, a popularity that is itself worthy of study.<sup>28</sup> One Highlife song in particular was a big hit in the 1970s across much of Africa. *Sweet Mother*, recorded by Prince Nico Mbarga and Rocafil Jazz, is probably the biggest selling African

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<sup>28</sup> See Collins 1992, 1994 and 1999 on Highlife. See Part IV on South Africa.

single of all time (Graham 1999: 596-7).<sup>29</sup> But really there is no comparison with Congolese music. The widespread popularity of Highlife outside Ghana started after that of Congolese rumba and went into decline by 1980. It never achieved the level of record distribution or airplay. Ghanaian and Nigerian musicians never settled in large numbers elsewhere on the continent or established a standing that would allow their stars to tour the stadiums, halls and nightclubs of the continent for forty years in the manner of the Congolese. Even the success of *Sweet Mother* can be attributed in part to Prince Nico's innovative incorporation of the Congolese guitar style.

The generational classification by the Congolese of the history of their popular music is the perfect symbolic vehicle with which to represent continuity and change. Both are important to the spread of the music because they key into important forces in twentieth century African history. The synthesis of the new and the *folklorique*, the cosmopolitan and the indigenous has provided a central part of the continental appeal of Congolese music. This involves a discussion of how the musical culture of the diaspora, especially Latin music and the big 'show' concept from America, have provided part of the inspiration, along with the inspiration provided by indigenous music and dance traditions, for the creation of the one musical form in Africa that sustained an attraction outside its linguistic region of origin. This theoretically and politically charged arena is the subject of the conclusion.

The popularity of Congolese music bears some resemblance to that of Jamaican and Cuban music. They all originate in countries that found themselves on the sharp end

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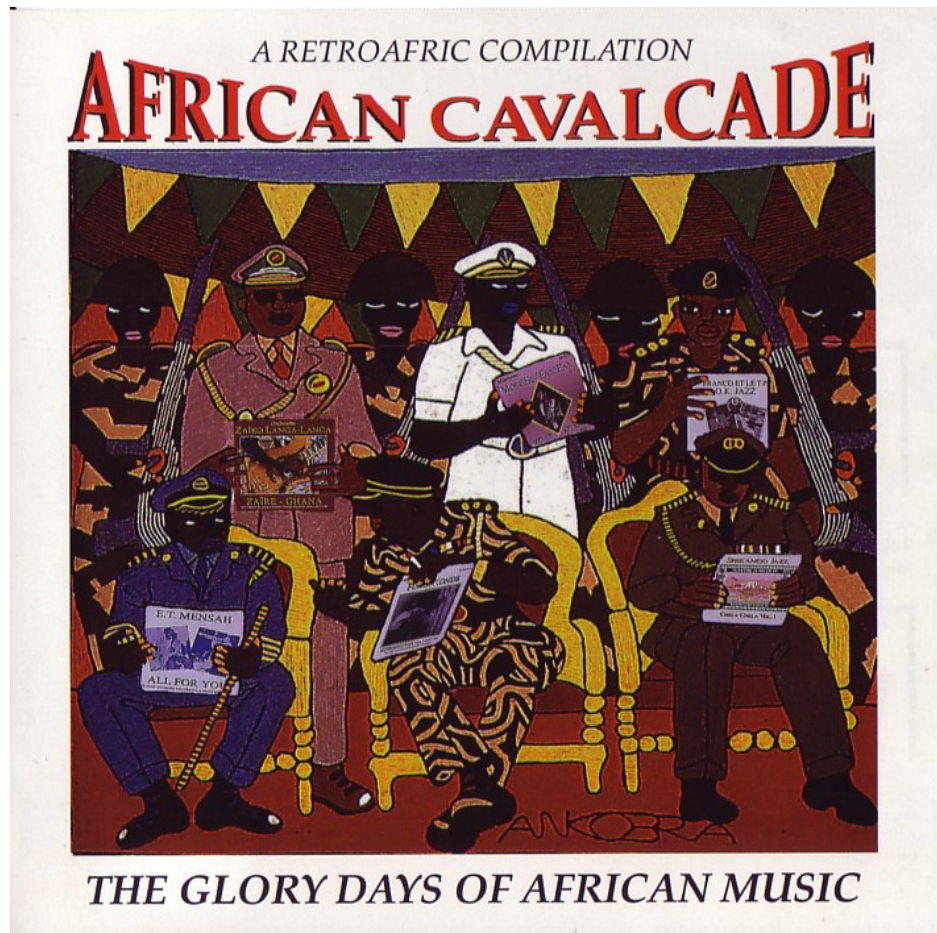
<sup>29</sup> It is estimated to have sold thirteen million copies in Africa.

of imperial and colonial history and like them suffered the economic and political legacy of that history in the twentieth century. Nonetheless Congo, like Cuba and Jamaica, has managed to project a cultural influence that bears no relation to the size of its GDP. By contrast the big economic powerhouses of South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt have never achieved the influence and spread achieved by the Congolese within Africa, despite the gradual collapse of the Congolese economy under the kleptocratic management of president Sese Seko Wazabanga Joseph-Désiré Mobutu, and the civil war that has followed his demise in 1997. So unlike the obvious links between the size of US and European economies and their capacity to project US and European culture internationally, Cuban, Jamaican and Congolese musicians have achieved an influence not dependent on the size of their respective economies or control of the international media. The supremacy of Congolese music within sub Saharan Africa in the post-independence era as the dominant Pan African form that has originated within Africa is not something other Africans dispute, even though that era may be coming to an end. In the following chapters I will attempt to tell the story behind that spread. The story involves the whole continent South of the Sahara and north of South Africa. This huge area, with all its variety of musical cultures has, nevertheless, been gathered into the warm embrace of Congolese rumba since World War Two. Some regions and countries, like Cameroon, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia fell in love and made new mixed musical babies of their own. Others, like Ghana, Mali and Senegal, were a little less promiscuous, going their own musical way and contenting themselves with long term affairs renewed whenever the Congolese musical ship came sailing in, especially when that form appeared in the guise of that most Congolese of big men - Franco

Luambo Makiadi who travelled the continent for forty years. The love story has a history that goes back to the birth of the lover in the Congo basin. It was either side of the mighty river that unites the Kikongo people of the basin, and divided the territories claimed by the French colonists and the Belgian King Léopold, that the Congolese music of love was born.

## Chapter One – The Seducer: The spread of Congolese music in Africa

### 1:1 The four generations



‘As my Cameroonian homeboy Sam Fan Thomas realised Franco’s appeal extended well beyond Congo and Zaire. In the 1960s bands like African Jazz, African Fiesta, Les Bantous de la Capital and OK Jazz had made Congolese music the one national style that people all over Africa listened to, and its popularity just kept growing in the 70s and 80s. You didn’t have to understand Lingala or any other Congolese language to feel those rhythms, love those voices and thrill to those guitars’.

(George Collinet: 2004 Grand Master Franco Afropop Radio broadcast.)

It may look in hindsight as if the entrepreneurs and technologies of dissemination, records and radio, were more important than musicians in the spread of their music. But entrepreneurs fail when they market music that does not appeal to the people. Music was played in homes, villages, churches, schools, and bars and in community gatherings without it being commoditised before and after independence in the two Congos. This is the social basis of the music. It provided, and still provides, the living archive on which Congolese musicians draw in creating their music. The music may have been recorded and promoted by Greek and Jewish entrepreneurs in Leopoldville in the 1950s, the story of which we will come to, but the music created in these settings came first.

The primacy of the creative energy of the musicians over the entrepreneurial energies of the salesmen, of production over exchange, has a second dimension. This force has had a coherence and continuity that has been allied to that crucial capacity for success in modern urban markets - the ability to change and reinvent. This is the point at which the drive to create and the drive to profit have come together in a fruitful marriage over the last fifty years for Congolese musicians. The history of those changes is critical in both explaining and understanding the continental spread of the music. Congolese musicians today have a very clear and straightforward understanding of that history. It is spoken of in familial terms, in terms of four musical generations. Rather than radical stylistic ruptures that are used to name changes elsewhere each generation recognises and affirms the legacy they inherit.<sup>30</sup>

There is a sense of a common story or narrative with which Congolese musicians

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<sup>30</sup> Between Ska, Rock Steady, Reggae, Lovers Rock, Dancehall and Dub in Jamaica or Rock and Roll, Pop, Rock, Punk, Two Tone, IndieRock and Dance in the UK for instance.

identify. Musicians, journalists and fans all use the same generational framework for the story.<sup>31</sup> In a sense this is now the tradition of popular culture that continues to play the dual role of providing materials for creativity while setting boundaries on the form that creativity takes and the genres it employs thus providing continuity in the process of change (Chernoff 1979; Fabian 1999).

Telling the story in the way in which it is generally told avoids some of the epistemological traps that surround the writing of a story that is not yours in a way that is basically different from the way you were told it. There is no need to claim the high ground, the elevated intellectual heights from which to make an accurate triangulated historical map of those crawling through history with their limited worm's eye view, unable to see the big picture from on high. It is also a good story. It is the story of how the artistic and commercial growth of the music business at home in Kinshasa and Brazzaville provided the basis for the subsequent spread of that music to the rest of the continent.

For each of the four generations the work of making music has remained essentially the same. First there is the job of finding musicians with the necessary commitment to creating and rehearsing the music, while promoting and travelling to gigs is no mean achievement in a country the size of the Congo. Recording the music and funding that recording, promoting the records through the media and generating a profile at home and abroad remain the basic work of the musician. The development

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<sup>31</sup> Typically it is the academics that have chosen to come up with their own frameworks. For instance Stewart (2000) does not use the language of generations to structure his story. Kazadi wa Mukuna (1999) does not include the first generation as a generation. Twchebwa (1996) uses the word *vague* (wave) to periodise the music.

of the self-confidence and courage to set off for neighbouring countries and beyond was necessary for the subsequent spread of the music. Sometimes this was organised by managers but more often it has been musicians with no instruments and no gigs and nothing but their skills just taking the risk and setting off overland.

Each of the four generations can be viewed in terms of a major division of the founding school into two competing camps. These competing camps have then helped drive the commercial and artistic development of the music for that generation.<sup>32</sup> Each time a new split occurred and fierce competition ensued it generated press interest and that of fans, in Nairobi, Lusaka and Douala as well as in Kinshasa. It may be that some of these conflicts were in part manufactured for precisely that purpose.

The Democratic Republic of Congo's greatest export is its music. Today, Congolese music is known for a high rate of splits and the proliferation of bands... But even when the musicians appear to be such big enemies, off-stage, they remain friends bound by the urge to excel and keep the Congolese musical flag flying. This would explain the common reunions and reconciliations. (Ngaira *The Nation* 24/02/02 'When intense rivalry boosts music')

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<sup>32</sup> I am indebted to the Kenyan journalist Amos Ngaira for pointing out the significance of these recurring and pivotal conflicts (Ngaira: Nairobi 10/04/02). See White (2004: 180) on the same subject. White quotes an interview with the Congolese journalist Achille Ngoy in which Ngoy claims to have encouraged musicians to fight to generate an interesting story.



The press take an interest in the battle of the bands for top hits, to stage bigger shows in Kinshasa and Paris or to be the first to come up with a new dance craze. What Ngaira perceives as having kept the rapt attention of fans, and so has led to band members playing the press, is the endless discussion of whether this rivalry is underpinned by personal animosity between band leaders or more excitingly ‘escrocherie’, in which claims of underhand financial dealings are made. The mother of all modern Congolese big bands and the originator of the second generation, Joseph Kabasele’s African Jazz, split when Docteur Nico departed with Tabu Ley to form African Fiesta in 1963. The rivalry of this band with OK Jazz became the core rivalry of the second generation. Zaiko Langa Langa, the founding band of the third generation, split and produced more than three or four major competitors. The band that is seen to have started the fourth, or Wenge generation, Wenge Musica, split when two leading band members, J.B. Mpiana and Werra Son, fell out with each other in 1997 and formed two rival bands both claiming the Wenge title, J.B.Mpiana’s Wenge BCBG and Werra Son’s Wenge Maison Mère (Mumbu 2002).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> This article gives an insider Kinois fan’s take on the origin and nature of the split and subsequent rivalry for fans and musicians both sides of the river.

## The precursors to the first generation

In the 1940s four streams of musical influence fed into the work of the founding and first generation, influences that added to its subsequent appeal outside its birthplace.<sup>34</sup> The first is the music the Congolese brought with them when they migrated to the capital from all over the Belgian Congo.<sup>35</sup> The second is that of other Africans who settled in Leopoldville and Brazzaville especially the *Coastmen*, Africans with a broader musical experience. These were the sailors and workers that travelled the Atlantic coast of Africa. The *Coastmen* formed an association called CAMADATO (Association des Originaires du Cameroon, du Dahomey et du Togo) in Leopoldville. This association provided the model for Congolese social groups in the capital (Kazadi wa Mukuna, 1999:74). Senegalese migrants formed a sizeable proportion of African migrants to Brazzaville (Martin 1996: 26). Brass was the instrument of choice for the music these associations performed at weddings, funerals and baptisms. Sailors from Ghana and Sierra Leone also settled in Leopoldville, bringing with them their Highlife and Palm Wine music, along with guitars, accordions, gramophones and records (Stewart 2000: 15). From these sources Congolese musicians picked up how to play the instruments and tunes of the migrants. These *Coastmen* also carried Congolese records back to their home countries and so acted as a vector for the music's diffusion (Fargion 2004: 6).

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<sup>34</sup> See the major sources on Congolese music history for this early period. Lonoh 1969 and 1990. Bemba 1984. Tchebwa 1996. Stewart 2000. Mpisi 2003, Kazadi wa Mukuna 1979, 1999a and 199b, Ndaywel è Nziem also has a good summary 1998: 480-488.

<sup>35</sup> The focus here is upon the Belgian Congo because although important in the evolution of the music Brazzaville has not been so important in producing the bands or music industry responsible for the spread of the music in Africa

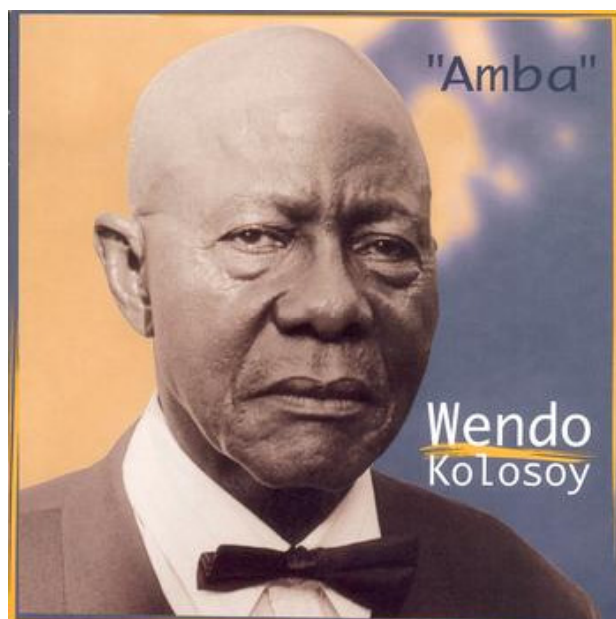
The colonists provided the third stream. This was the popular Church music of Europe and the foreign instruments with which to play it. Recordings of indigenous Congolese music were broadcast alongside this European and New World music by a station called Congolia that started broadcasting in 1939 (Kazadi wa Mukuna 1999: 75). This third stream flows directly into the fourth, the music of the black Atlantic diaspora, from the Caribbean, Latin America and North America that made its way back to Africa on the radio. The *Coastmen* played records of the diaspora on their phonographs in the 1930s to those who cared to listen. They also brought elements of diaspora music to the Congos in their own palm wine and Highlife music. The white Belgian and French colonists imported popular jazz records in the 1930s and 1940s. The strongest European influence came from the popular Italian tenors of the day, most important amongst them being Tino Rossi.<sup>36</sup> This influence has been blamed for the ‘tenorisation’ of many of the best-known Congolese singers, especially Kabasele and Tabu Ley (Stewart 2000: 39). The most important new influence arrived with the Latin craze that gripped the USA and then Europe in this period.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Rossi’s 1946 worldwide hit ‘Petit Papa Noël’ provided one of the first generation with his stage name.

<sup>37</sup> See Chapter 5: 4.

## The First Generation



Wendo Kolosoy is thought of as the founder of the first generation alongside his guitarist partner Henri Bowane, although they had older pre cursors upon whom they drew.<sup>38</sup> Paul Kamba's 1944 Victoria Brazza is the most obvious of these. Wendo called his own band Victoria Kin in 1948. Wendo and Bowane recorded their first record in Leopoldville in 1948.<sup>39</sup> From the welter of African, European and New World music that was washing ashore in Leopoldville, Wendo and Bowane, amongst others, created a new form that had an instant appeal for their fellow colonial subjects. It appeared on record and on the airwaves for the first time as well as

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<sup>38</sup> The Brazzavillian academic Mfulla Fylla Saint-Eudes hotly contests any such claim on the grounds that Kolosoy is too young to hold that title and that there are in fact a collection of musicians born almost a decade earlier upon whose work Kolosoy based his music. He insists that the only logical way to schematise Congolese popular music history in generational terms is by a strict adherence to the decade in which musicians are born. By contrast the Congolese generally use the schema used here. Ndaywel è Nziem (1998: 485) implies a similar thing by writing of Kamba as Wendo's master. The album cover is of a 2002 release on Marabi records.

<sup>39</sup> This places them quite late in the story of recorded music. Zonophone started making recordings in 1909 in South Africa, on the Gold Coast and in East Africa.

performed live.<sup>40</sup> Three elements in the new music can be picked out that contributed to this popularity. First there is the use of the guitar. This was a new instrument associated with the modernity and cosmopolitan cachet of the *Coastmen*.<sup>41</sup> At the same time the guitar has proved to be the instrument which, more than any other, has allowed for the transposition of rural music all over Africa to the town, as new ways of playing that echo the sounds of rural African acoustic instruments have been created. Second the use of Lingala, the language of choice in Kinshasa and a lingua franca in the military. Third the use of the most popular rhythms and songs of the time from Latin America that came ashore with the sailors, and on imported records, mutating in the hands of the Congolese musicians to form the beginning of something distinctively Congolese. According to Guy-Léon Fylla musicians would sit listening to a popular song like *El Manicero* over and over again to copy the melodies and rhythms but start to throw in Kikongo words in the 1940s.<sup>42</sup> In the first recordings the line up was limited to guitars, double bass, percussion and vocals without trap drums or a horn section. The break with Cuba comes in the use of guitar to replace piano and *tres*<sup>43</sup>, and the use of Lingala, Congolese rhythms and thumb piano influenced guitar playing. Congolese musicians say Latin music is experienced as something familiar because it is felt to have its rhythmic roots in Africa, even in some cases specifically in the Congo. As Cuban Son returned to its

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<sup>40</sup> Others that Kazadi wa Mukuna (1999a) credits as founding fathers of this generation are Anatole Kaseye and the rather different guitarist singers from Katanga - Jean Bosco Mwenda and Antoine Mundanda though he claims all were influenced by the palm wine picking style. Kazadi wa Mukuna does not follow the generally recognised generational scheme that musicians and fans use. Instead he treats this first generation of singer/guitarists as a movement prior to the first generation of modern Congolese orchestras. Listen to *Roots of Rumba Rock Vo. I and II* and *Ngoma: The Early Years, 1948-1960*.

<sup>41</sup> For more on the important role of the *coastmen* in development of popular culture see Martin (1996).

<sup>42</sup> Fylla is a Congolese musician from this time. (Stewart 2000: 15)

<sup>43</sup> The *tres* is a Cuban instrument that resembles a guitar but uses 3 sets of two strings.

rhythmic roots in Africa, the two-way flow across the Atlantic of influences was complete. The song that proved a big hit for the pioneers Wendo and Bowane, and has remained so to this day, is called *Marie Louise*.<sup>44</sup>

When Wendo and Bowane are credited as the founding fathers of the first generation it is in this line up and musical form. Many others like them started out playing alone in the guitar troubadour style, and only with the advent of recording in the 1940s did the bands start to form around them. In this period the new recording studios acted as the magnets for the formation and dissolution of bands. For a start musicians did not often own their instruments, which meant they were dependent on the studios or bars that owned instruments to perform. In that sense, the studios acted like competing football clubs that formed teams of musicians. The comparison with football is apt given how close popular music and sport were in this era (Martin 1996; Goldblatt 2006: 491, 507; Tsuruta 2003). The competition lent itself to the frequent movement of team members attracted by better prospects or financial offers from rival studios. For instance one of the most important studios behind the first generation, Loningisa, lost one of the founders, Bowane in 1956, when another Loningisa based band, OK Jazz, eclipsed his popularity. With the help of the ubiquitous Greek businessmen Bowane started a new studio called Esengo. He proceeded to poach musicians from his former employers at Loningisa and another rival studio, Opika and even two stars, Essous and Rossignol from OK Jazz (Stewart 2000: 65).

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<sup>44</sup> This song has been re-recorded several times since. The first ever recording of it made in 1948 can be heard on the album *Ngoma, the early years, 1948-1960*, p. 101. The album finishes with a second version recorded by Wendo in 1958. There is a translation of the song text in the sleeve notes. Both versions can be heard on the attached CD (CD 1 tracks 1 and 7).

1960 to 1980 The Second Generation: 'La Belle Epoque'<sup>45</sup>



As the language of generations implies, there was no radical rupture between the first and second generation. The second generation of musicians drew on the musical and professional innovations of the first. The innovative finger picking techniques of the first generation and the basic I-IV-V-I chord progressions were carried into the musical storehouse on which subsequent generations drew for creation and performance. The brass band music of urban social associations formed in the 1930s

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<sup>45</sup> Photo appears in Stewart 2000: 85.

and 1940s provided a vital resource in the fusion that was to take place in the second generation. The brass bands drew on West African, European and Congolese influences (Kazadi wa Mukuna 1999a: 533).

What differentiated the second generation from the first, and what was to prove the basis for its pan-continental success, was the fusing of the new brass playing skills found in the social clubs of the two capitals with the new guitar and singing styles of the troubadours in big band interpretations of the Latin American music that swept America, Europe and Africa in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>46</sup> It was the instrumental line up of this Afro-European urban hybrid music that provided the inspiration for the founding father of the second generation – Joseph Kabasele Tshamala aka *Le Grand Kalle*, aka *Kalle Jeef*, in his creation and leadership of the legendary band African Jazz. The simple line up of the first generation – two acoustic guitars, vocals and percussion with the addition, on occasion, of single wind instruments – expanded in the late 1950s to include double bass, a brass and woodwind section, congas and maracas and backing vocals. African Jazz incorporated musicians from Harmonie Kinois, one of the two most popular Congolese social dance bands of the 1940s that appropriated the Highlife music of the *Coastmen* followed by Latin music (Kazadi wa Mukuna 1992: 75). The rival brass band of the era was called Odeon Kinois. Critically, in differentiating the sound of the Congos from the Latin American music that had such a strong appeal, first two and then three electric guitars driving the music from the centre replaced the role of the *tres* and piano characteristic of Cuban *son* across the Atlantic.

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<sup>46</sup> Listen to *Out of Cuba* 2005.

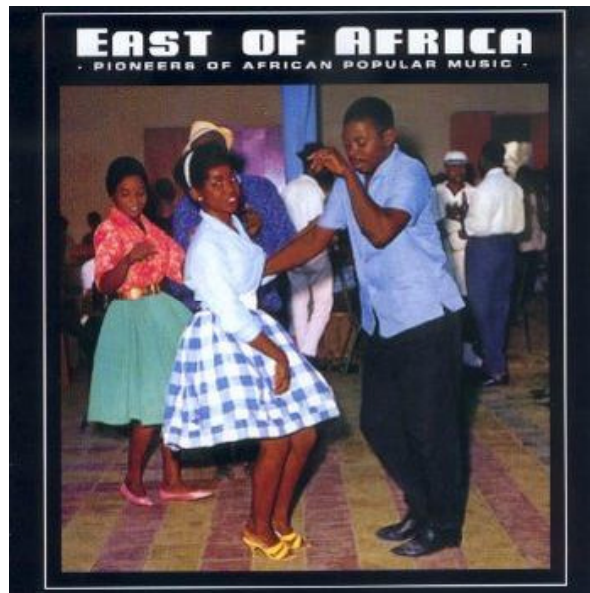


Acoustic guitars disappeared by the late 1950s in the major bands. A Rwandan, who was a student in the 1960s, remarked that it was the modern quality of these instruments and the sound it gave Congolese music that could not be matched by East African bands and this contributed to its defeat of local East African competition.<sup>47</sup> Kabasele specialized in producing versions of Latin hits often singing in Spanish. The inheritor of the African Jazz tradition – Tabu Ley ‘Rochereau’ – continued to take pride in his band’s first rate cover versions of songs with Spanish lyrics when he left African Jazz and formed his own band in the mid 1960s. Using Spanish was seen as another indicator of the new generation’s cosmopolitan status. Another innovation on the other side of the diaspora coin was made in the incorporation of African roots – this was the gradual move to Congolese rhythms, melodies and language in the second generation. In this department the Congolese see Kabasele’s and then Tabu Ley’s main competition, and the founder of the second musical school of the second generation, Franco and his band OK Jazz, as pre-eminent.

Booming record sales provided the capital for the maintenance of larger bands and the beginning of professional full time employment. It also funded the purchase of the new instruments, which extended to trap drums and electric bass. Tabu Ley introduced these in his band in the late 1960s.

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<sup>47</sup> Interviewed in Edinburgh 26/12/2005



A milestone in the continental popularity of Congolese music came with independence. The *Independence Cha Cha Cha* by African Jazz was recorded in Brussels at the time of the independence negotiations in 1960.<sup>48</sup> It appealed politically as well as musically to the continent. The instrumentation, the Latin sound of the *Cha Cha Cha*, the African lilt of the Lingala lyrics, the fusion of African, diasporic and modern elements stood as a musical version of the aspirations of African nationalists. In Angola those caught listening to the music at the time were considered by the Portuguese colonial authorities as suspect Lumumbist sympathizers with dangerous aspirations for Angolan independence. This African version of urban sophistication was not welcome by the colonists.<sup>49</sup>

A crucial portion of the African Jazz split away in 1963 with accusations of financial irregularities and underpayment of band members directed at Kabasele (Mpisi 2004:

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<sup>48</sup> Listen to track 13 on the attached CD (CD 1) for this African Jazz classic.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Angolan broadcaster Joal Boachim London 12/12/2003

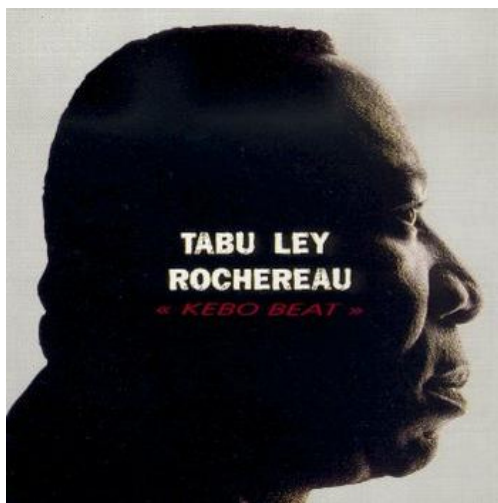
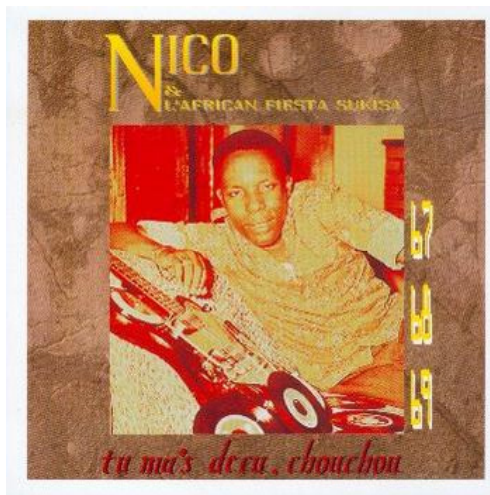
157). Tabu Ley has kept the vocal tradition of African Jazz and the school of Congolese music with which the band is associated alive into the new millennium.<sup>50</sup> He left African Jazz and formed African Fiesta with the legendary guitarist ‘Docteur’ Nico. Dr. Nico is considered the founder, with Tino Barrosa, of the ‘one note at a time’ school of Congolese guitar playing. Tabu Ley went on to form a band of his own in competition with Dr. Nico. Both Dr. Nico’s band African Fiesta Sukisa and Tabu Ley’s African Fiesta National (later Afrisa International) were at the forefront of the post-independence travels of Congolese bands around newly independent Africa, especially East and West Africa.<sup>51</sup> The international touring inspired songs geared to the local markets the musicians discovered. For instance in the 1960s Dr. Nico composed the song Aruna about a girl from Tanzania, and African Fiesta Sukisa released Nakeyi Abidjan about the capital of the Ivory Coast and Echantillon inspired by a trip to Sierra Leone (Stewart 2000: 139). Dr. Nico also released Adieu Freetown and Afrique de L’Ouest on the album *Asala Melekoum*.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Listen to track 12 *Kelya* (CD 1) for the first recording of Tabu Ley after he joined African Jazz in 1959. It also provides a good example of the guitar work of Dr. Nico as does track 13. Listen to track 16 *Paquita* for more of Dr. Nico’s guitar work and a track that shows the heavy influence on Tabu Ley of Latin American music, with passages of ‘Spangala’.

<sup>51</sup> In this era they were the best known of Congolese musicians in Africa. It was not until the 1970s that Franco’s continental popularity took off according to Congolese journalist Abel Hamban Pulusu (Brussels: 03/01/06).

<sup>52</sup> Nico and L’African Fiesta Sukisa 1967-9 released on Sonodisc:1998. The album of Tabu Ley pictured above was released by Tabu Ley in 1997 on the Sonima label.



Tabu Ley made his first independent trip to Europe in 1963 when he met the Beatles in Berlin.<sup>53</sup> He went to Holland and Belgium in 1966 as well as doing a major concert in Zambia in the national stadium.<sup>54</sup> His regular touring of the African continent continued after the decline of Dr. Nico's Sukisa in the early 1970s and that of African Jazz by the late 1960s. Like Franco he composed songs that endeared him with African heads of state, starting with the song *Président Tubman* (Liberia 1944-1971) in 1965, followed by *Amitié Senegalo-Congolaise* in 1967 and *Bel Abijan* in

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<sup>53</sup> Tabu Ley met and sang with the Beatles backstage in Berlin in 1963 and according to him taught them the value of singing unison vocal lines. Interviewed in Kinshasa 16/09/05

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Sam Mangwana who was performing with Tabu Ley by the time of the trip to Zambia in 1966.

1969 (Mpisi 2003: 449). He also composed songs for Modibo Keita and Kenneth Kaunda that did not get recorded but were performed at the independence day celebrations to which he was invited.<sup>55</sup> Tabu Ley performed in Canada in 1966, in Zambia in 1967, in France in 1970, in Angola, Zambia and Senegal in 1971. On this occasion he received the 'Order of Merit of the Lion' from Senghor. He performed in Tunisia at the Pan African FESTAC celebration in 1972, in Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar and Uganda in 1973 with the sponsorship of PolyGram. He also spent seven months in London this year, when he says he performed with Bob Marley. He also claimed to have played with Jimi Hendrix at the Q club though Hendrix died in 1970. In 1974 he was in the Ivory Coast, in 1975 in Japan, in 1977 in Nigeria and in 1978 on an African tour that took in Cameroon, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Mali, Togo and Benin. In 1978 Tabu Ley described taking 36 musicians to East Germany after a visit to Senegal. In 1979, 1981 and 1983 he did tours of East Africa and another of West Africa and Angola in 1982. In 1984 he toured the USA before touring East Africa again in 1985 and 1986. In 1987 he performed in Brazil and was back in Senegal in 1988. His first performance in South Africa was in 1991.<sup>56</sup>

Tabu Ley has travelled as extensively in Africa, Europe and America as any Congolese star and has produced a huge corpus of songs and a style of singing emulated by many of the biggest stars of subsequent years, Papa Wemba probably being the best known. Madilu, as a member of Tabu Ley's band, remembers going to over fifteen African countries including Algeria in 1969 for the Pan-African

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<sup>55</sup> Tabu Ley interviewed in Kinshasa 16/09/05.

<sup>56</sup> All the preceding information is from Tabu Ley's memories when interviewed in Kinshasa with the attendant provisos about the accuracy of all the dates.

cultural festival.<sup>57</sup> His first performance in Kenya was in 1962. He played in the national stadium in Kenya in 1971. He represented Zaire in Tunisia in 1972 at the Pan-African Festival. Tabu Ley actually made East Africa his base of operations, settling with his band in Kampala in 1973. He also sent three of his children to school in Nairobi and the United States International University there (Mpisi 2004: 290 and interviewed in Kinshasa 16/09/05).

I have sang about Kenya many times since I first came to the country in 1962 and I have performed on many of the country's national celebrations. I was the only international musician who laid a wreath on Mzee Kenyatta's mausoleum when he died. Even in other countries Kenyan Embassy officials usually warmly receive me. (Tabu Ley quoted in the *The Standard* 16/10/04)

In 1974 Tabu Ley produced a hit in Swahili for the East African market *Karibou ya Bintou* (Welcome to Bintou) that also topped the charts in Kinshasa. Tabu Ley lost out to his archrival in the distribution of patronage from Mobutu at this time. According to Mpisi this was because Mobutu always considered Tabu Ley with suspicion, in contrast to Franco (Mpisi 2004: 291). His Kikongo ethnicity, and the association of African Jazz and himself with Lumumba at the time of independence, did not help. In the absence of the same level of state patronage Tabu Ley looked to make his band financially secure through foreign markets. This meant touring

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<sup>57</sup> Franklin Boukaka represented Brazzaville and performed his legendary song *Les Immortels* listing his fallen heroes Lumumba, Ché Guevara, Malcom X, Felix Eboué, André Matsoua, Simon Kimbangu shortly before recording the album *De Brazzaville à la Havane*, in 1970, in the state created recording facility, SOCODI, that Nguabi established to break the hold of Kinshasa and Europe on recording. The album celebrated the historic musical and new political connection with Cuba.

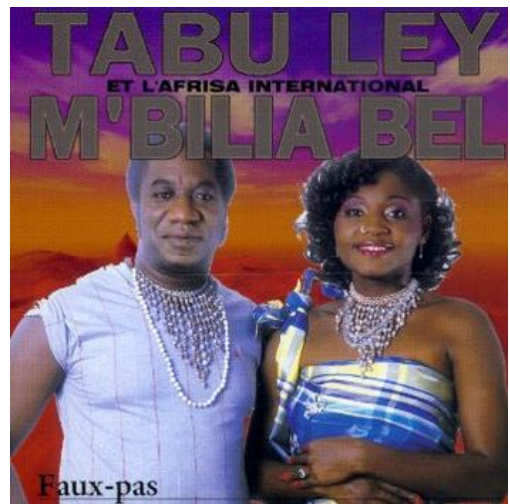
Africa, Europe and the USA. Tabu Ley was made an officer of the national order of Chad. He was based in London for four months in 1972. Tabu Ley had the commercial acumen to set up his own distribution company called SPIN in the mid 1970s. He returned to the Kinshasa scene in 1975. The infusion of fresh energy from the capital led to another spate of success at home as well as abroad this time. Tabu Ley proceeded to indulge in some poaching of talent, in the form of Sam Mangwana who was Franco's star performer in OK Jazz at the time as well as seven other musicians (Mpisi 2004: 302).<sup>58</sup> This movement of musicians allowed them to develop their talents in the two major schools as a basis for future musical adventures independent of both.

In 1977 *Afrisa* embarked on a lengthy tour of West Africa and carried on to Europe where three members slipped away to join the growing community of musical expatriates in Paris, much to Ley's annoyance. After a lull at the end of the 1970s in Ley's fortunes they took off once again in the early 1980s when he began his collaboration with a beautiful young female singer and dancer - Mbilia Bel - in 1981. The song *Mpeve ya Longo* was their first hit and they took the show on the road to East Africa in 1982, playing at the Kenya International Conference centre in Nairobi followed by shows in Angola and Brazzaville.<sup>59</sup> This was followed by five months performing and recording in Europe, which again produced the quality musical goods for export back to Africa.

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<sup>58</sup> Stewart tells a contradictory story (2000: 230) of musicians moving the other way, particularly Ley's lead guitarist "Michelino" leaving Tabu Ley and joining Franco.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Kenyan fan Nairobi 15/05/02 and Tabu Ley: Kinshasa 16/09/05



The huge hit *Eswi yo Wapi* came from these recordings in Europe. It was a hit at home, in East and West Africa, as well as with Zaire's southern neighbours. The partnership with Mbilia Bel continued to prove fruitful for Ley and *Afrisa* for the next five years. Towards the end of this period the couple ended their partnership with two tours of East Africa – to Rwanda, Burundi and Kenya between August and October of 1986 and another in February and March of 1987 to Tanzania (Stewart 2000: 329 and *Kenyan Nation* 10/10/1986).<sup>60</sup> After Mbilia Bel's departure Ley found a female replacement in the form of Kishila Ngoyi, whose stage name became Feya Tess. The collapsing Zairian economy and degradation of Kinshasa by the late 1980s finally led to Ley's departure to set up shop in Paris from where he continued to organize tours of Africa, Europe and America. Before Franco's death the two big men of Congolese music made peace and recognized their shared status as the grand patriarchs of the music scene. They recorded an album together in 1983 after sharing the honour of being awarded gold records in Abidjan for the massive sales they had made separately over the years in West Africa (Stewart 2000: 283). They returned to

<sup>60</sup> Listen to Tabu Ley's classic song for Kenya, *Nakei Nairobi*, sung by Mbilia Bel with his band Afrisa recorded in 1986 (CD 2 track 9).



Kinshasa for a joint audience with Mobutu. In 1994 Ley made his final move to the US where he settled in California.

Apart from setting the standard by which other Congolese singers are judged Tabu Ley was also responsible, in the early 1970s, for the introduction of 'the big show' concept in large venues. He was influenced, in this, by having seen James Brown. This was not so much a musical influence as an influence in the way performances were choreographed and staged. This new influence had the same sort of modern and cosmopolitan cachet that was previously associated with the Latin musical influence. Because it has made less of an impression on the music than on dance and stage craft it has attracted less attention. This new commitment to the kind of entrepreneurial investment necessary to make staging big shows in stadiums possible is one of the factors in the continental spread of the music. The big show concept was introduced on a televised performance at the Olympia, one of the biggest venues in Paris, in 1970. Pulling off big shows of this sort in Paris at the most prestigious venues, the Olympia and Zenith, became a rite of passage to international status within Africa for future Congolese bands and still provides the video footage that is marketed all over Africa. Mobutu saw Ley's triumph as a threat to his own international pre-eminence and he ordered Tabu Ley home before his contract with the Olympia finished. Mobutu sent the presidential jet to bring the band home. Mpisi sees the success of the Olympia shows as the reason that Tabu Ley was subsequently greeted as a visiting musical super star in the rest of Africa and on tour in Zaire. 'It was a veritable industry of the spectacular with male and female

dancers... He went out to conquer Africa and everywhere he went he met the same success and the same hysteria and motorised corteges' (Tchebwa 1996: 86).



Tabu Ley's Olympia style show from the early 1970s.

Tabu Ley sees the big show concept as one of the principal reasons for the long duration of his musical success (Mpisi 2004: 304 and interview Kinshasa 16/09/05). Essentially what the show involved was the introduction of higher levels of technical input in terms of sound and light, more publicity, shows in big arenas, co-ordinated outfits, and the inclusion of female dancers, sometimes doubling on backing vocals, as band members with their own distinctive identity. Ley borrowed the idea of the big show not only from James Brown but also in part from Claude François, a French pop star of the time, showing the modern and cosmopolitan influence was not exclusively from the black Atlantic. There was the inclusion of French *variété* music in Ley's repertoire and Ley borrowed another idea. *Claude François et ses Clodettes* became *Tabu Ley Rochereau et ses Rocherettes* (Tchebwa 1996: 87). This became

the template for his main rivals, especially Franco, who formed his own female dance troupe the *Francorettes*. The highly popular *Trio Adjessi* formed the *Adjessiennes* in the early 1970s. Tchebwa writes this was one of the factors that helped produce a sensation wherever these stars travelled on the continent.<sup>61</sup>

The guitar style in which Dr. Nico excelled remained the style of choice for the lead guitarists that Ley employed in *Afrisa* and it has been this style using a pick, rather than the thumb and index finger technique of the Franco school, that in the third and fourth generations has remained dominant. Although Franco got the lion's share of state patronage in the early 1970s Ley was promoted in one powerful organization. SONECA was the organisation that was charged with collecting royalties for distribution to artists and Ley became its president in 1977 and this helped balance the position of dominance Franco had achieved.<sup>62</sup> The competition between Fiesta and Sukisa was fierce while it lasted but the strongest competition came from OK Jazz. This is the band whose leader is best known all over Africa, and helped establish the pre eminence of Congolese music on the continent for forty years.

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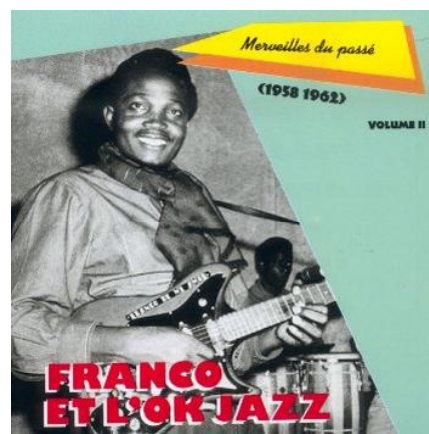
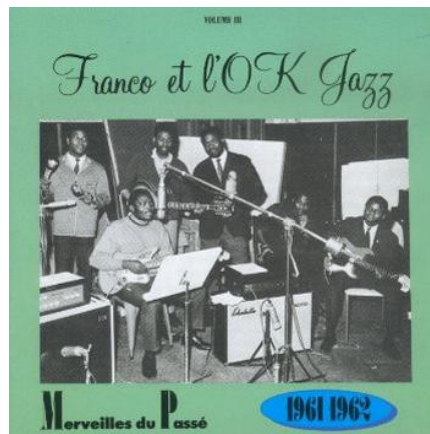
<sup>61</sup> See Mpisi 2004: 229 – 256 on the effect of the Olympia show for Tabu Ley in Africa.

<sup>62</sup> Tabu Ley returned to Kinshasa when the Kabila took power in 1997 to take up a short lived political office as a deputy in the parliament. With the forthcoming elections on the horizon Ley is trying once again to find a direct political voice through the party he is backing at present called the Force du Peuple. His long time ambition has been to become mayor of Kinshasa.

## Franco and TPOK Jazz: 'On Entre OK on Sorte KO'



L'Okango La Ndjé Péné Luambo Makiadi 'Franco' and the Toute Puissant Orchestra Kinois Jazz. This is the full title of the man and his band the Grand Master and King of the rumba himself, the Congolese Balzac, Franco Luambo Makiadi. Cometh the hour, cometh the man. Franco stands out as the presiding 'big man' of Congolese musical history between 1957 and 1989 when he died. He probably exceeds Tabu Ley when it comes to continent-wide recognition and when comparing the relative force of a particular individual and band's contribution in providing the music for diffusion and doing the work of diffusing it in the period as whole. The odd suspect reference to sales levels cannot do justice to the status that Franco achieved all over Africa but also the esteem in which he is held at home.



He and his band, usually known as OK Jazz, stand out for many reasons. One of the most important is Franco's capacity to resist the forces of division that led to the break up of so many of the great bands of Congolese history. Franco was always able to maintain the standing of his band and that meant in the early days any serious defections could be replaced. In later years Franco built up a huge stable of reserves to cover any defections. To do this for more than forty years meant the band established an enduring presence in the minds of Africans. No other Congolese band has matched the longevity of the band OK Jazz from 1957 to 1989, nearly spanning all four generations.

This would mean little were it not for the music the band created and the appeal it was to have. Although sales figures are unavailable the cost of financing albums and the ability to pay the monthly salaries of musicians are a good indication. By this measure OK Jazz is unsurpassed with at times over 40 musicians and over 140 albums to its name and upwards of 600 singles (Ewens 1994: 273-306).<sup>63</sup> It is indicative of the change that occurred with the third generation that not many dances

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<sup>63</sup> Ewens (1994) has compiled an impressive, though as he says incomplete, discography of Franco's output.

are accredited to OK Jazz.<sup>64</sup> OK Jazz is one of the two schools of Congolese music of the second generation. Franco's singing style and his guitar technique, as well as the way he incorporated Congolese rhythms and melodies, distinguished his music from that of the Kabasele/Tabu Ley school. The competition between OK Jazz and first African Jazz then Tabu Ley's bands, and the two schools they represented, drove the music industry in Kinshasa for thirty years, even after the advent of serious and fresh competition from the third generation in the 1970s. It was these two bands that established the touring circuit on a grand scale to the stadiums of Africa in the 1960s. It was their music that provided the hits in Kenya and Tanzania as it did in Cameroon and Angola. Franco's songs rang out across the continent's airwaves and live in the stadiums and grand halls.

It is hard to overestimate the significance of his work. This can be judged from any angle. The quality and depth of his compositions knew no peer. Fans across Africa grew up with his music as the background to their lives. His capacity to appeal to, to speak for and challenge the people of Zaire in his lyrics was matched by his capacity to move those who couldn't understand the lyrics in the rest of Africa with his performances. The size of his band, and those he pulled into its orbit as reserves, reached epic proportions in the 1980s.<sup>65</sup> In 1976 the magazine *Salongo* counted 9 singers, 11 guitarists, 6 saxophone players, 4 trumpeters, 2 trombonists, 2 conga players and 2 drummers in the band (Stewart 2000: 230). The size of Franco's belly also grew steadily with the size of his band reflecting the wealth that allowed him to eat as much as he wished. The size of his appetite for musicians and food never

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<sup>64</sup> The *Apollo*, (1966) *Mayenu*, and the *Cha Cha Cha*

<sup>65</sup> Madilu Dar Es Salaam 19/03/02. Madilu left Afrisa to join TPOK in 1980

diminished his most important qualities - the power of his playing and his charisma on stage.

For some fans and fellow musicians Franco is seen as having started to behave in the musical realm in a fashion parallel and similar to that of his most important patron President Mobutu. For instance he is accused by many of undermining his musical rivals by poaching their musicians and with them their fans as well as slowing the production of their records. Franco confessed to such under-hand tactics in undermining the Festival des Maquisards, the band that gave the two biggest orchestras their fiercest competition in the mid 1970s. 'Those kids made our lives very difficult. We couldn't make a living with them attracting the entire population. Therefore Tabu Ley and I decided to put an end to it by taking the group's key musicians. I took Sam Mangwana, and Afrisa took Michelino Mavatiku'.<sup>66</sup> Franco is even accused by Mobhe Jhomos of stealing the dancers who became the *Francorettes* from the band behind the beginning of the third generation Thu Zaïna. Whatever the basis for such criticism, the power Franco developed over the music industry at home helped give him the economic base for his adventures in the rest of Africa. In the 1970s Franco was able to escape the condition of economic dependence in which musicians previously found themselves. Franco managed to develop, purchase or gain control of all the major elements for the production, distribution and performance of music. First he bought top quality instruments, a mixing desk and a public address system, which came with Mobutu's help. Second he built the huge Un-Deux-Trois club, which included offices and rehearsal space on

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<sup>66</sup> Franco interviewed in Washington D.C. Nov. 1983 by Kazadi wa Mukuna. (Kazadi wa Mukuna 1999b: 78)

land gifted by Madame Mobutu in 1972. The Un-Deux-Trois club became the centre for high society and the political elite from the time of its completion in 1974, with many private rooms, secret entrances and an exclusive separate upstairs club. Indeed according to the Congolese promoter Mobhe Jhomos this was the reason Madame Mobutu contributed so generously to its creation.<sup>67</sup> It was somewhere she could send people to enjoy themselves in the company of Zaire's top band.<sup>68</sup>

The third step for Franco was gaining control of production after the November 1973 pronouncement that foreign ownership of businesses would be ended. In July 1974 the main production facility in Zaire, the MAZADIS-Fonior pressing plant was taken from its owners and given to Franco by Mobutu.<sup>69</sup> Subsequently musicians and labels had to wait for his go ahead on production and of course his own music came first. Franco's last coup was to take the presidency of the Union des Musiciens Zaireois (UMUZA), which, in 1973, was given the power by Mobutu to grant or deny permission to musicians wishing to travel abroad. Mobhe Jhomos claims this was the position Franco abused in order to rid himself of the competition Le Trio Madjesi posed in the early 1970s. UMUZA imposed a ban on their performing for six months while full band salaries had to be paid following a supposed infraction of travel rules.<sup>70</sup> With his friend Kabesele, who was president of the performing rights society SONECA at this time, making sure he was paid royalties promptly, Franco

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<sup>67</sup> Mobhe interviewed in Kinshasa 05/10/06

<sup>68</sup> It was abandoned in 1993, and taken over, in a sign of the times, by evangelicals, after the looting of Kinshasa.

<sup>69</sup> The power this afforded Franco was however fairly short lived. The subsequent collapse of the Zairean economy in the late 1970s, as a consequence in part of this policy, made maintaining production in the facility near impossible. The cost of the updating machines and importing raw materials became prohibitive when inflation hit 60% in 1978.

<sup>70</sup> See *Salongo Musique* 17/23/88 for Franco's response to these accusations and *Regard Afrique* No. 10 Dec. 2005 for more on Mobhe's view of events.

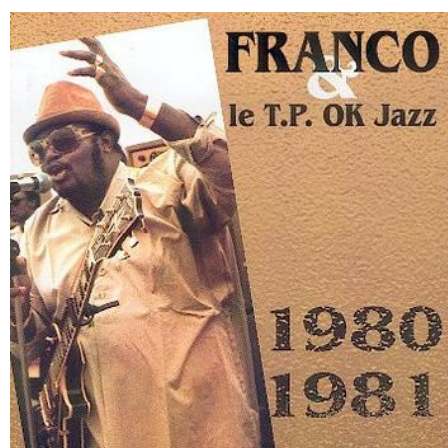


was in an unassailable position. There were defections and departures from OK Jazz but Franco treated the band like a family to which it was always possible to return. Ngaira gives an idea of Franco's status in East Africa when discussing the expulsion of Kanda Bongo Man from Kenya after a huge show in 1990.

**Ngaira** - Moi would never have expelled Franco. There would be diplomatic problems with Zaire. He was like an ambassador at large. The flags were at half-mast on his death in Nairobi. The people loved him more than any political leader. You would look very stupid if you expelled Franco. (Interviewed in Nairobi 10/04/02)

Sam Mangwana, one of Franco's longtime band members saw commercial acumen in Franco from the beginning.

**Mangwana** - When Franco and Kabasele's old bosses left at independence and went to Europe they became their own distributors in the whole world and Africa. That was how Kabasele and Franco made such good careers. Good distributors that's thing. (Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04)



The scale and frequency of Franco's tours in Africa became legendary in the 1970s.

**Mangwana** - You know in Africa the only people that could invite Franco were the ministers of culture because to move Franco one had to move 3 tons of equipment. That was the whole studio with which we recorded, that became the PA for touring and we used the same mixing desk. We took the whole lot in the plane. It was a studio that had been built for Franco in Belgium by the company Televic. Franco would say that he couldn't do a production without this equipment, with his own 24 channel mixing desk, because he was such a perfectionist. When Franco played it was like the records. He wouldn't allow people to say 'Ah Franco, the cost of all this...' he didn't like that.

- *So he went to Guinea with 3 tons of equipment?*

**Mangwana** - We travelled with that. I remember we always needed a plane, a 737, just for us.

- *So who organised that?*

**Mangwana** - The minister or the government...Sometimes when he saw me in a beautiful car he'd say you're right. If you kill that image and people think ah Franco's a poor type that would demoralise many people, when people are struggling and look to me as an example, you must not show the

people in the street that you are unhappy. Even when you are unhappy you have to smile. (Mangwana: Glasgow 27/10/04)

Mangwana gives us an idea of how the conspicuous display of wealth - clothes, cars, houses and so on - that characterises the Congolese music videos of the 1990s and the 2000s has its roots in the poverty of the majority of the urban population, a poverty these musicians are keen to appear they have escaped through the success of their music. The perception fans have of the humble origins of most musicians in the same places they themselves inhabit, the truth in the case of Franco, reinforces the power of the musicians to act as aspirational role models for youth who feel trapped in the slums of Kinshasa or the decaying regional towns and cities. In East Africa Franco and OK Jazz are often viewed as being the force that established the supremacy of Congolese music there and all subsequent bands have continued to cultivate and reap the harvest from the ground that he had broken. Franco understood the role of the celebrity, as Mangwana says, but according to Kenyan fans he was also very approachable. He would often be seen walking the streets of Nairobi in the 1970s. He played many more times in Kenya than Tanzania due partly to Nyerere's attempts to encourage Tanzanian music. The most obvious way for Franco to endear himself to the leaders of newly independent Africa was by composing songs for them. He composed *Mobutu na Bokassa* (CAR), *President Eyadema* (Togo), *Papa Leon Mba* (Gabon) and *President Kaunda* (Zambia) – a list which reflects some of the regions of Franco's popularity (Ewens 1994: 237). Establishing the entire extent of Franco's touring history from the memories of his musicians and manager is unnecessary. Here are the memories of Roitelet

Munganya, one of his guitarists, that date from the birth of OK Jazz and last through the most important phase of the spread of Congolese music.

*When did you start touring outside Congo with OK Jazz?*

**Roitelet** - The first tour outside was in 1955 to Brazzaville and Gabon. We signed a contract for 3 days a week, for 3 months with Massedoo in Brazzaville in 1957 for several months. We went to Brazzaville fairly often with a simple *laissez-passer*, we called that a *permutation*, and the Belgians gave you that easily. The same for Bangui. There was no need for a passport in those days. We went to Point Noire after that and then to Gabon. Just before independence we went to Haute Volta. URM invited us there. We went to Senegal for the *Festival des Nègres* in 1956 and then we went to Nigeria in 1963 for the festival and we did a tour in Nigeria, to Lagos and then Ibadan and then Togo, Benin and Ghana. When they heard we were coming because they had heard us for a long time on the radio and on records they organised things. We were very well looked after. We didn't have a producer in Nigeria. They heard we were coming and they were waiting for us at the airport. We didn't have any arrangement before setting off, we just bought the tickets. We didn't have a contract. Bobby Benson, the trumpet player, knew us and he helped organise our residence in bars. He played with us then, he adapted easily because he had already heard the music. In those days in the 1950s it was Papadimitriou of Loningisa who recorded and distributed our music in Nigeria. In the 1960s Fonior took

over. In 1966 we went to Dakar and Cameroon under our own steam, Mali in big halls, in Guinea we were invited by Sékou Touré for stadiums and big halls, Ivory Coast, Abidjan, under our own steam, that was not organised by Houphouët-Boigny. It was full to breaking point everywhere we went in those days. We played in bars in Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo and Benin. But they weren't open bars like here. They were closed in bars. We played in stadiums in Senegal, Mali and Guinea in the 1960s. In 1961, 1962, 1963 we went to Europe and then 1967 and 1972 with Fonior. We went to Central Africa for Bokassa. In 1970 we went to do Kenneth Kaunda's propaganda. We sang for him and his party but we didn't record that. We stayed in the intercontinental hotel. In 1973 we went to Zambia again.

*When was the first tour of East Africa, Kenya and Tanzania?*

**Roitelet** - We were invited by Nyerere in 1971 to play in stadiums in Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. We stayed in the Palm Beach Hotel. There were fifteen dead the night we played in Dar es Salaam. We were protected in the middle of the stadium. When we started playing they opened up the chains and people charged forward to see how we were playing. They rushed into the stands and people who fell over were crushed. We carried on playing the government picked up the dead. We went to play in all the little provinces of Tanzania, Arusha, Mwanza, Kigoma. We only played there once in the early 1970s. I stopped playing professionally in 1973. We went to play in Kenya after Tanzania in 1971 invited by Moi. We played in the stadium

there. All these countries were big fans of our music whether East or West. We went to Angola after independence. Sudan as well we played in Khartoum in 1970. We were never went to Madagascar in those days. We played in Uganda for a festival of the Loya invited by the state in 1976. We went to Burundi and Rwanda twice. We went to Chad invited by Tombalbaye several times. His name was François so that was one reason he liked us, because he had the same name as Franco and he liked it when the fans chanted Franco but he was a huge fan of the band. Those are dangerous people in Chad. They are still fighting to this day.

## Verckys

The only major musical force with the commercial acumen to rival Franco and Tabu Ley in the second generation in marketing his music was one Georges Kiamuangana, better known as Verckys. As a saxophonist rather than singer or guitarist he wasn't the natural front man but when it came to business and charisma on stage he could rival the other big men. Like them he set about building a recording, distribution, and nightclub business and started signing bands after he left Franco's employment in 1969. Verckys worked in OK Jazz for six years before he left and started his own label and band – Vévé.<sup>71</sup> The year Verckys left Franco he signed the popular young bands Trio Madjesi and the Festival des Maquisards to his new Vévé label. The following year both bands started performing abroad.<sup>72</sup> The deterioration of the Zairian economy at the end of the 1970s undermined record production in Kinshasa. Musicians lost an important source of income from record sales and had to survive by gigging. The big three, Tabu Ley, Franco and Verckys, started going to Nairobi and Abidjan to get records pressed and re-imported them to Zaire and exported to the rest of Africa. The other lucrative part of the music industry was in owning and running nightclubs in Kinshasa, especially big and fashionable ones. Tabu Ley had the Type K, Franco the Un-Deux-Trois, and Verckys built the six-story Vévé centre that he still owns at the time of writing. All three men managed to ride out the initial shock of economic decline with these alternative sources of income and from international tours. For other Congolese musicians, like Kanda Bongo Man and Sam Mangwana, the decline in Kinshasa made the rest of Africa and Europe more

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<sup>71</sup> Listen to a classic of the era of authenticity that Verckys recorded with his band Vévé in 1972 *Nakomitunaka* (CD 1 track 17). For its translation see Stewart 2000:173.

<sup>72</sup> Interviews with band members and Verckys – Kinshasa: 24/09/05

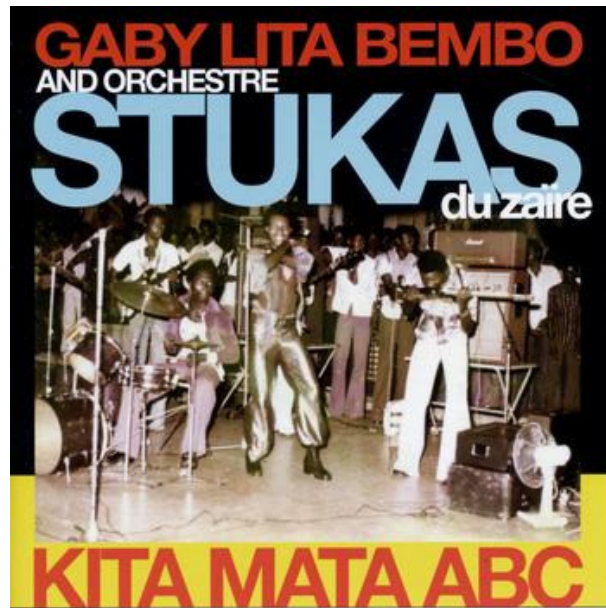
attractive and a new period of exodus to bases abroad began by the late 1970s. The decline in the Zairian economy thus had a mixed impact on the spread of the music. It resulted in the permanent settlement of Congolese musicians abroad, who acted as agents of dissemination, but it severely weakened the powerhouse of Kinshasa commercially.

There were other important bands and characters in the 1960s as the music scene in Kinshasa exploded, far too many to list here and well documented elsewhere (Stewart 2000). Among them Nyboma and Orchestre Kamale and Negro Succes with Bavon Marie Marie (d.1970) should be mentioned. Verckys label Editions Vévé sponsored the bloom of three other important bands in the 1970s - Bella Bella, Lipua Lipua and Empire Bakuba. In the late 1960s and early 1970s a new breed of band evolved influenced by rock and roll and the soul of James Brown and Otis Reading. They were called Yé-Yé bands and were known for their long hair, sun glasses, hats, motor bikes and an attraction to light skin. Amongst them were the Trio Madjesi<sup>73</sup> and the Stukas. The Stukas, founded in 1967, lasted until 1983. A real showman, Lita Bembo, led them. They were responsible for a host of dances: *La Bionda, Crapeau-Crapeau, Mata-kita, Mombombo, Motors Retro Osaka Dynastie, and Toyo Motors.*

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<sup>73</sup> Stewart 2000: 155.





In Brazzaville Orchestre Bantou de la Capitale remained the dominant player. Ry-Co Jazz established itself in Cameroon and then Dakar, blending elements from other parts of West Africa where they toured. This band was the first to drop the first slower vocal part of Congolese songs and move straight to the faster guitar solo driven section called the *sebene* for their new audiences in the late 1970s. Towards the end of the era other stars began their rise, Sam Mangwana in West Africa and Samba Mapangala in East Africa. Pépé Kallé (d: 1998) and his band Empire Bakuba acted as a bridge between the second and third generations incorporating elements from both.<sup>74</sup> They toured East Africa extensively, and became popular in Zimbabwe and Zambia in the 1990s. Empire Bakuba toured Tanzania and Kenya in 1990, 1991 and 1996. They had some famous dances amongst which were the *nager sous-marin* (swim under water), *esombi* and *masasi calculez* (meaning a carefully aimed bullet, a

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<sup>74</sup> For an example of their work designed for the East African market with a Swahili name *Shikamoo Seye* listen to CD 3 track 4.

dance inspired by the civil war, which involves aiming and shooting an imaginary gun).

The best-known women, other than Mbilia Bel, who have performed in the traditions of the second generation, are Abeti Masikini, M’Pongo Love and Tshala Muana. Muana is best known for the dance and rhythm associated with her region of origin, Kasai, the *Mutwashi*, a BaLuba dance. Tshala Muana based herself in Abidjan in the 1980s but also toured East Africa many times with big tours in 1993 and 1994. Her popularity in Kenya has always been high. She was invited to perform at Kenya’s fortieth anniversary independence celebrations in 2002, along with thirty musicians and dancers. After 19 years in Paris she returned to Kinshasa in 1997 at the invitation of Laurent Kabila to take up political office as a parliamentary deputy and to perform in Kinshasa.<sup>75</sup>

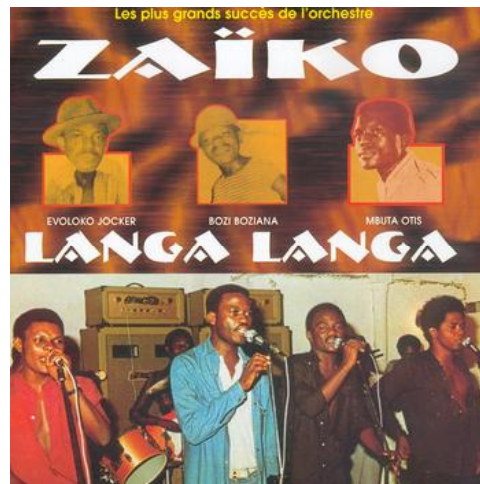
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<sup>75</sup> Muana interviewed in Kinshasa 14/09/05.



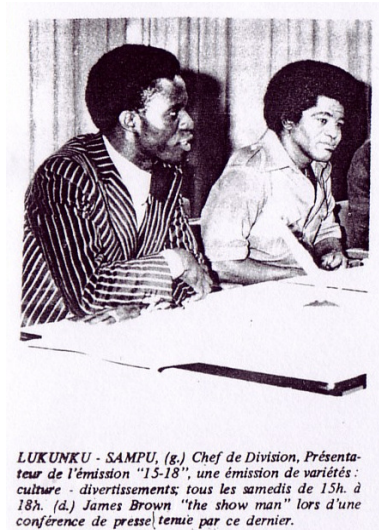
Muana, in the background with her troupe of dancers.

## The Third Generation: 1971-90



The band credited as the founders of the third generation are Zaïko Langa Langa. Though Thu Zaïna preceded them, playing in a similar vein, it has been Zaïko and its offshoots that really established this generation's national and international presence. In the music of the third generation the lyrics were delivered with less finesse and more energy. Cries of *animation* filled the songs and helped drive the music to a faster beat. The style of the guitar solo, or *sebene*, was changed. Dr. Nico and Franco improvised freely. The new generation began to repeat two or three insistent riffs over a snare rhythm, and repeat them to make the guitar solo into a passage dedicated to driving singers and fans to ever more intense dancing. As part of this concentration on driving the dancers the brass section was removed from the music. Kinois youth took on some of the dress codes and mannerisms of black American soul and funk that had arrived in full force in the repeated visits of James Brown to Zaire after his first visit in June 1972. In some bands, the Mustangs for instance,

they even started singing covers in English of soul hits using the services of a Congolese student who studied in England.



June 1972 picture of James Brown in Kinshasa from music magazine *Bilenge*.<sup>76</sup>

Zaiko also incorporated this new cosmopolitan influence. The young students that formed the new bands of the third generation did not have the resources of the big established bands but they made up for this with youthful energy and innovations in the music, dance and fashion. For both generations this healthy competition revitalised Congolese music and reasserted the modernity as well as continuity in their music. The new drive of the younger generation provided the basis for the continuing pan continental hold of their music while the second generation continued to keep older fans on board.

The third generation changed the line up to make the front row of male singers into dancers when the *sebene* kicked in and generally made dance central to their

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<sup>76</sup> Magazine kindly lent by Kanda Bongo Man

appeal.<sup>77</sup> Dance had been important before but Zaiko and the third generation latched onto it's potential as a marker of band identity. The *cavacha* rhythm came to underpin the music.<sup>78</sup> By the late 1980s they were spending three months a year in Europe, East and West Africa. Brussels became their European base in the 1990s.

The musicians of the third generation learnt their craft on the streets and in the small bars of Kinshasa. They and their most ardent fans came from the new class of students that came into being all over Africa after independence as the new states expanded their universities and even in the case of Zaire gave out grants (Fumkwa 2003: 44). Zaiko acted like the big bands of the second generation as a nursery for new talent amongst whom were Shungu Wembadio, aka Papa Wemba, and Koffi Olomide.<sup>79</sup> Papa Wemba became particularly well known for his dances and for his role in the development of another youth movement dedicated to the worship of clothes and style called the *Société des Ambianceurs et Personnes Elegantes* or *Le Sape*, whose members were called *Sapeurs*.<sup>80</sup> 'Papa Wemba was the king of *Sape*, who dictated from Kinshasa the dress code and hair style for the youth of the whole country'. (Fumkwa 2003: 38)<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> It was one dance by Evoloko, the *cavacha*, with which the band became identified in the 1970s.

<sup>78</sup> Saying 'a shave and a haircut - two bits' in time to yourself indicates how this rhythm sounds. Thanks to Doug Paterson for this in personal communication. This is based on the classic asymmetric 3: 2 clave rhythm of Cuban Son.

<sup>79</sup> He composed songs for Papa Wemba in the 1980s while still a student in France and continues to be heralded as one of the best songwriters and crooners of recent times in the Congos.

<sup>80</sup> Amongst the dances with which Papa Wemba and his band Viva la Musica has been credited are *Eza-eza*, *Griffe Dindon* (literally designer turkey), *Kuku-Dindon*, *Kurunyenge*, *Machota*, *Mokonyonyo*, *Nyekese*, *Rick Son*, *Rumba-Rock*

<sup>81</sup> See Chapter 5:3

Koffi Olomide is known for his outrageous and costly outfits almost more than Papa Wemba and they play an important part in his self-promotion on video.<sup>82</sup> Papa Wemba was the star of a rare gem, the 1987 film *La Vie est Belle*, in which the sartorial proclivities of the era can be seen. The main splinter groups from Zaiko are Grande Zaiko Wawa formed in 1981, Langa Langa All Stars formed in 1981, Victoria Eleison in 1982, Choc Stars in 1984 and the split of Zaiko itself in 1988 into Zaiko Familia Dei led by Bimi Mbale and a more enduring faction, Zaiko Langa Langa Nkolo Mboka (Village headman), led by Nyoka Longo. 'General' Defao, Bozi Boziana and Evololoko Joker are other important international figures from the Zaiko stable. The long list of dances they claim as their own indicates the increasing significance of dance to the music.<sup>83</sup> All these bands had to survive during a long period of economic and political decline. This has included the collapse of the infrastructure for recording, mass production, distribution (transport) and retail sale of music (the collapse of the currency). The two elements that have survived are the club scene and radio and television. It is these problems that have led to the continuing exodus of Congolese musicians to Paris and elsewhere on the continent.<sup>84</sup>

**N'Yoka Longo** - 80% of the groups created in our country are inspired by Zaiko or have passed through Zaiko...What African bands in general play today consists of Zaiko's musical contributions: the tempo of the drums, the snare, the way of playing the *sebene*, the dancing section of a piece, as well as the team of *animateurs* with the *atalaku*, our Congolese rappers. All

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<sup>82</sup> See his 2003 offering *Affaire D'État*.

<sup>83</sup> Refer to appendix 6 for dances claimed by Zaiko as their inventions. For an example of the work of Zaiko in the year of the most serious split (1989) listen to SOS Maya (CD 2 track 2).

<sup>84</sup> The contribution of the expatriate scene in Paris to the continuing diffusion of the music in Africa is dealt with on the section on the travels of the bands.



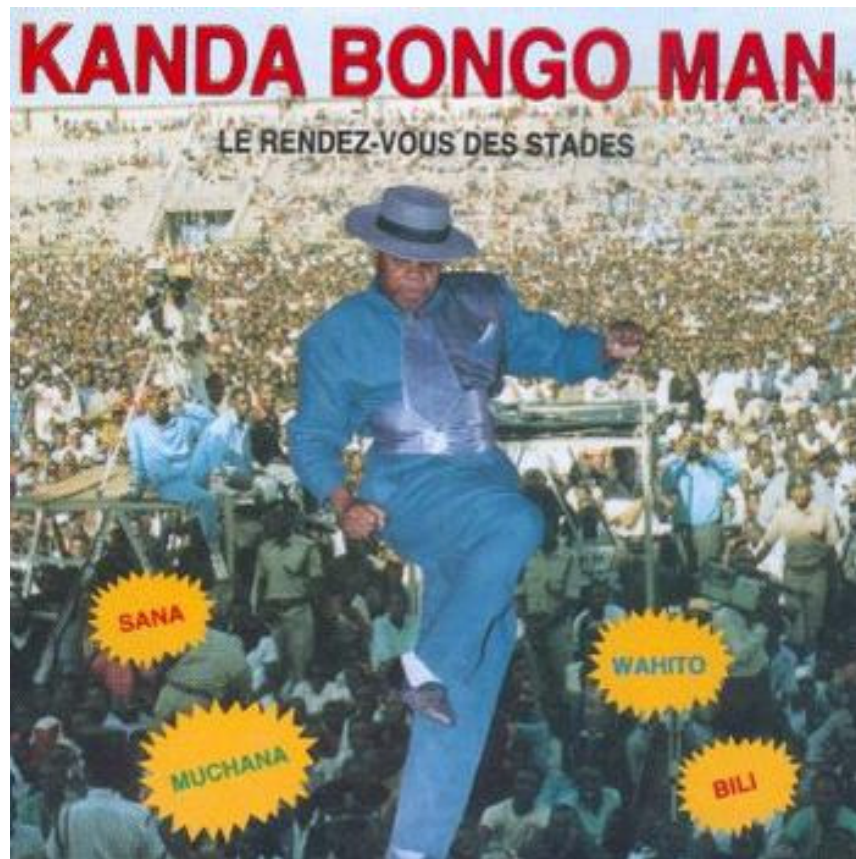
groups take Zaiko as a model and want to emulate us. (Nyoka Longo 2002)

Innovation also came from the expatriate scene that developed in Paris and Brussels in the 1980s led by offshoots from Sam Mangwana's African All Stars, Les Quatres Étoiles, Soukous Stars, Loketo (meaning hip in Lingala) and Arlus Mabele, Pablo Lubadika as well as Kanda Bongo Man in the early 1990s and Awilo Longomba in the late 1990s. These Paris bands introduced a more polished studio sound that cut out the slow introductory passage.<sup>85</sup> The synthesiser and the drum machine made headway and made recordings cheaper and attractive on the dance floor. The European based musicians formed smaller, leaner bands better suited to the tough musical economics of living and working in Europe and these smaller bands without horn sections and with instrumentalists doubling as vocalists also made touring in Africa cheaper. All these bands established a presence by touring in East and West Africa.

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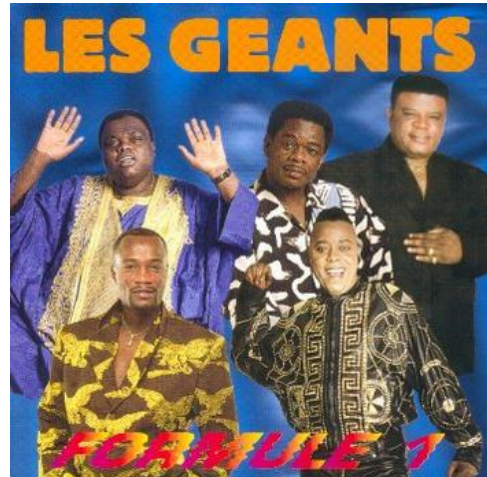
<sup>85</sup> For one of Kanda Bongo Man's best known songs in this vein listen to *Liza* from 1987, (CD 2 track 10), on the attached CD.





The scene is taken from Kanda's momentous sold out concert in the Kenyatta stadium in Nairobi and is on the cover of the video of his African tours.

## Koffi Olomide



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In the 1990s Koffi Olomide and his band Quartier Latin took the continent by storm. With a large line up of singers and dancers they proved that it was still possible to tour in Africa with a big band in the way Congolese bands had since the 1960s. Koffi has moved fluidly between Kinshasa, Europe and the rest of Africa. Koffi has represented a different strain from the central currents of Congolese music as these have gravitated more and more towards the dance floor. In the 1990s he sang many love songs at a slower pace and more intimately than much recent Congolese music that is driven with cries of animation and he developed a huge female fan base.<sup>87</sup> It harks back to the sounds of the first and second generation. In both styles the centrality of the three intertwining guitars of the second generation has declined. In the new millennium Koffi has moved into the mainstream of the fourth generation, towards the dance oriented music of the Wenge generation, known by the name of a dance *ndombolo*. *Ndombolo* music has replaced the *kwassa kwassa* made famous

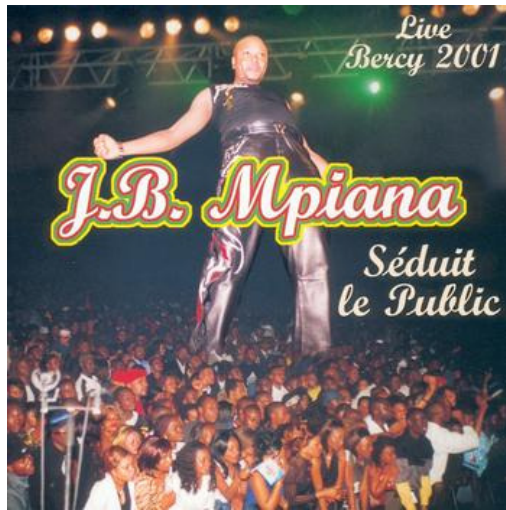
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<sup>86</sup> A 1999 release on Sono/Syllart that features Sam Mangwana, Madilu, Pépé Kallé, Koffi Olomide and King Kester Emmenya who straddle the second to the fourth generation.

<sup>87</sup> Listen to the song *Gros Bébé* for an example of Koffi Olomide's style (CD 3 track 6).

by Kanda Bongo Man and Pépé Kallé, the *soukous* of the Paris bands and Zaïko and the rumba of Franco and Tabu Ley.

## The Fourth Generation



The originators of the fourth generation are the members of a school band that was started in 1981 called Wenge Musica.<sup>88</sup> It was not until the late 1990s that the band was identified as representing a distinct and fourth generation. This band has picked up Papa Wemba's taste for expensive foreign fashions, especially recognisable designer labels combined in ways that still usually manage to appear distinctively Congolese. If there is something that really distinguishes the music of this generation it is the way the vocals have been foregrounded over the sound of guitars. A range of singers often sing in turn, taking a verse each, while the main star encourages them in a conversational tone. Big choral vocals and the cries of the *atalaku* are even more important to this generation. Most significant is probably the way video clips of prestigious huge live shows, European location shoots and studio performances have made the appearance and dances of the bands almost as important

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<sup>88</sup> An earlier but less significant split occurred in the early 1990's with the creation of Paris based Wenge Paris. See Swinnock (2003) for reviews of albums and concerts as well as band news from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generations. For one of their first recordings listen to *Mulolo* made in 1989 (CD 3 track 2).

as the music, as it is these that are seen all over the continent on bar televisions and in nightclubs, and it is the videos and DVD's that sell almost as well as the music. The originators of the third generation were no longer young by the late 1990s and with the arrival new leadership and international money in Kinshasa the town was once again ready for a new youth movement. Wenge Musica is the band that has provided it. It is interesting that despite the move of so many musicians to Brussels and Paris and the depths to which the domestic economy, politics and security situation sink it has still been Kinshasa that has produced this new generation rather than Paris. This band's two major stars and their bands still live in Kinshasa.

Like so many bands before them Wenge Musica split in 1997 soon after their rise to stardom into Wenge Musica Bon Chic Bon Gens (BCBG) headed by JB Mpiana<sup>89</sup> and Wenge Musica Maison Mere headed by Werra Son, who likes to call himself *Le Roi du Fôret*.<sup>90</sup> The album cover above, of an Mpiana show in the big Paris venue of Bercy, shows how African the crowd Mpiana attracts in Europe is. Mpiana's last album *Internet* is produced and distributed by a French company, Simon Music, and Werra Son's 2002 album *Operation Dragon* was produced by JPS France.<sup>91</sup> They are not going through the small British labels that service the 'world music' market. The style they play has been endlessly mimicked in East Africa and is the foundation of the line up of bands like Rumba Japan in Nairobi. This involves the usual drum, bass, keyboard, two guitars and usually a percussionist as a kind of back line behind a long line of six or seven singers. The singers are divided between somebody doing

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<sup>89</sup> <http://www.wengebcbg.isfun.net/>

<sup>90</sup> Interviewed in Johannesburg 26/03/04 and Kinshasa 14/09/05 respectively. See De Boeck (2004: 41) on the basis of the appeal to 'the forest'. Listen to Mpiana's song *Sens Unique* (CD 3 track 7).

<sup>91</sup> Listen to song *Operation Dragon* on CD 3 track 1.

a kind of shouting lead singing called 'le crier', an *animateur* or *atalaku* who talks over the music and a choral backing by the others who tend to be in the middle.<sup>92</sup> In instrumental breakdowns the whole line performs choreographed versions of the latest dances or any new ones the band want to be identified by. This generation continue to conquer the rest of their own continent in a way no other African country manages but they have not been able to break out of the Congolese 'ghetto' in Europe and into the lucrative 'white' markets. Mpiana is as much a businessman as he is a musician. Authenticity and the influence of American fashion on his outfits do not concern him very much but he believes in the power of music.

*- Do you think people escape into music because of the war and the economic dislocation?*

**Mpiana** - For consolation yes but the culture is older than those problems, it's always been with us, the music is part of us that's clear. With all the political problems that we have in the country at the moment music can play the role of bringing people together, to reconcile them not just to console them.

(Mpiana interviewed in Johannesburg 26/03/04)<sup>93</sup>

With the arrival in power of Laurent Kabila in 1997 the extent to which the life of the Congolese nation is bound up with its music is well illustrated by the engagement of Kabila in the intense rivalry between Werra Son and J.B.Mpiana, their supposed

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<sup>92</sup> See White (1999) on the role of the *atalaku*.

<sup>93</sup> Mpiana was embarking on the recording of his album *Anti-terro*.



backers Koffi and Papa Wemba, and their fans who had begun disrupting rival concerts with violence.<sup>94</sup> Where else in the world would the head of state get involved in a spat between two musicians and organise a public reconciliation?<sup>95</sup>

Likewise Werra Son was invited to entertain the participants at the inter Congolese dialogue in Sun City. He also bought buses for the three main football teams in Kinshasa after a trip to Europe showing the links with sport.



Werra takes delivery, in the compound of his home in the hills of Mbinza, of a new machine on which he planned to make an entrance at his next show in Kinshasa.

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<sup>94</sup> See De Boeck (2004: 120-121) on the violent rivalry between their fans.

<sup>95</sup> Amos Ngaira *The Nation* 03/02/02. Joseph Kabila participated in bringing about a reconciliation concert in 2002 – the opposite of the classic image of Bob Marley reconciling warring political antagonists Edward Seaga and Michael Manley in Jamaica in 1978. (*Africultures* 21/11/02) See *Jeune Afrique* (07/03/06) for more on the proximity of these Congolese musicians to the new world of electoral politics.

## **1:2 Establishing the Congolese Musical Church- The Missionaries and the Converts**

‘The rumba of Congo is a musical form that has hit a nerve throughout Africa, animating dancers of all ages and social classes in a way no other regional style, not even Ghanaian highlife has come close to matching’.

(Ewens 1999:458)

Over the last fifty years Congolese music has remained without parallel in its presence and influence outside its area of origin. Indeed because the music of other African countries has remained largely nationally confined most musicological research has also been similarly confined.<sup>96</sup> As a general tendency the Francophone and Swahiliphone countries are the natural destination for Congolese musicians, given that organising business is easier with a common tongue. That said Anglophone countries in West Africa have also proved fruitful for the Congolese. Nigeria has long provided a lucrative destination for Congolese stars and continues to do so.<sup>97</sup> Awilo Longomba toured Nigeria in 2000 and Koffi Olomide in 2003, performing in packed stadiums.<sup>98</sup>

Amongst all the African nations the propagation of Congolese music by musicians was easiest to neighbouring countries and it is probably in these where the influence is strongest – Angola, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Southern Sudan, Central

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<sup>96</sup> Even work that covers the whole continent is categorised nationally. See Broughton et al. 2006, Bender 1991. The most interesting exception to this rule is Kubik (1999). Ranger (1975) provides a regional perspective.

<sup>97</sup> Interview with Verckys on 1970s distribution to Nigeria. Kinshasa 18/09/05

<sup>98</sup> This tour is now the subject of a documentary for the Africa wide satellite broadcaster Channel O. <http://www.mnet.co.za/channelo/ArticleDetails.asp?ArticleId=889>



African Republic, Gabon and Cameroon. But it has also been strong further away in Francophone West Africa. This is especially true at the heart of the music industry in that region. In the 1970s and 1980s Abidjan became a Mecca for musicians from all over West Africa. Many Congolese musicians set up shop there when the Congolese economy started going downhill in the late 1970s. The most notable of the expatriates was Sam Mangwana with the African All Stars.<sup>99</sup> Tshala Muana was a big hit in Abidjan in the 1980s. From Abidjan bands made tours of West Africa, to Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Ghana and Senegal. In East and Southern Africa, Malawi came under the spell of the Congolese by the 1970s, as did Botswana and Zimbabwe. The trend continued in the 1980s and 1990s when the likes of Empire Bakuba, Koffi Olomide and Kanda Bongo Man and more recently the Wenge generation started travelling East and South from the Congo.

The Congolese presence in Anglophone West Africa has not been properly investigated. In the 1960s Ghanaian Highlife was a competitor in West Africa with *Rumba Congolaise* but in the 1970s even Highlife started feeling its influence. In eastern Nigeria Chief Osadebe, a Highlife star, complained of the tendency of their musicians to look to Zaire for inspiration (Stapleton and May 1987).<sup>100</sup> For instance Prince Nico Mbarga of Rocafil Jazz took up the Zairian tendency to foreground the guitar over the horns. Nico called the new sound ‘panko’ and described it as ‘Zairian music in a Nigerian setting... We take the instrument in a Zairian way. After playing

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<sup>99</sup> For an example of Sam Mangwana’s work from this period of fame when he recorded in Paris as well as Nigeria listen to his song *Tchimurenga Zimbabwe* (CD 2 track 3). In this he demonstrates that his vision of his African market and the Pan-African political struggle was not limited to Central and West Africa.

<sup>100</sup> The tendency for writers to focus on national music throws the presence of the Congolese into the shadows.

lead for some time, I leave it for the rhythm guitar, drums and congas. This is the way the Zairians play'. (Stapleton and May 1987: 42)

One of the reasons behind the success of Congolese music in its continent-wide diffusion is the absence of a serious competitor, other than Highlife, which provided the only real potential competitor in the post war period (Collins 1992, 1994 and 1999). Storm Roberts (1999: 218) suggests one of the reasons Highlife never achieved the enduring and widespread popularity of the Congolese is that it was too specifically West African for East African tastes and that by contrast the rhythmic foundation of Congolese music 'was not associated with any one part of Africa' and this contributed to its East African popularity. African musicians from other countries failed to establish a touring circuit or to settle away from home in the manner of the Congolese. Storm Roberts points out that Highlife did also borrow some Latin influences. E.T. Mensah's trumpet playing 'owed much to the muted solo trumpet at one time featured by Perez Prado, and by Prado's British imitator, Eddie Calvert ... and Ghanaian flutists are influenced by charanga flute playing' (1999: 218). That said the rhythmic and harmonic foundation in Highlife remained West African (Kubik 1999: 112). E.T. Mensah, with his band the Tempos, took this music to new heights and new places in the 1950s before the Congolese really started travelling (Collins 1992: 51- 57). The band made repeated tours of Nigeria in the 1950s and went to the Ivory Coast, Togo and Dahomey in 1955 and Guinea and Senegal in 1958 for instance but by 1958 the Tempos were no longer welcome in Nigeria. Local musicians and their union began to prevent them from playing having become jealous of the competition to their own Highlife music. Mensah moved on

to Francophone West Africa. Here Mensah claims to have seen a generally more severe social exclusion of Africans from town centres in the French colonies he visited when compared with Ghana and Nigeria. It was only white Europeans playing Latin music that he found in the nightclubs of Abidjan and Conakry in the 1950s (Collins 1992: 51).

The French people dominated the blacks socially and this affected the music as the whites were doing everything. They had white musicians from Paris, but the African musicians were not up to standard: so the dance music from the Africans was small...The development, both social and musical in the French territories, has occurred mainly since independence and now they want to catch up. (Collins quoting E.T. Mensah 1994:55-6)

These remarks on the spread of Highlife are included to avoid the impression that Congolese rumba was the only urban music to make any headway outside its country of origin in Africa and because Mensah is talking about the musical context in which the Congolese were soon to make their appearance. There are two things he says of significance. First his remarks about the weakness of modern black urban dance-bands in Francophone West Africa may help explain why these countries were so susceptible to the allure of the new Congolese music that arrived by the mid 1950s on the airwaves and on record. Conversely Ghana, like South Africa has a black urban dance band tradition that goes back to the First World War and Ghana, like South Africa, has proved more resistant to the attraction of *Rumba Congolaise*.

Second Mensah makes a vital point about the domination of urban dance music by white musicians in French West Africa and the detrimental effect this had in his view on the development of urban African musicians. This view requires further investigation. Third the dominance of white French dance bands appear to have been a conduit not so much for the influence of French music as the Latin dance music that was all the rage in Europe at the time. This may also be true of Leopoldville judging from the absence of black dance-bands comparable to those found in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa in the inter war years. So the primary New World influence on the evolution and sound of the music that was to arrive from Kinshasa and Brazzaville was already very familiar in francophone Africa. In Ghana and Nigeria Latin music is not the primary influence in Highlife. Before the arrival of Congolese musicians in West Africa in the 1960s local musicians began to copy what they were hearing on records and on the radio.

E.T. remembers hearing this music (Congolese) live for the first time in 1957; the group playing it being the Melo Togos from Lomé. By the late 1950s Congo records were appearing in Ghana and the first band to play the style in Ghana was the Shambros under the leadership of a Dahomean musician, Ignace de Souza. (Collins 1994:57)<sup>101</sup>

Senegal, Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso all became popular destinations for Congolese stars based in Abidjan in the 1960s and 1970s according to Madilu.<sup>102</sup>

The journeys of lesser-known Congolese bands, like Ry-Co Jazz, began before those

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<sup>101</sup> It may be significant that this musician was Dahomean given that they formed part of the group that made up the coastmen as petty clerks in the Congos. Martin 1996: 25

<sup>102</sup> Interview with Madilu. Dar Es Salaam March 2002

of the great Congolese stars of the 1960s and 1970s. Sierra Leone, like the rest of West Africa was within the powerful embrace of radio Brazzaville in the 1950s. By 1967 the influence was strong enough for Ogoo, a guitarist in Sierra Leone's most popular band the Super Combo Kings to remark, 'Nico, Franco, Papa Noël, Rochereau, Lipua Lipua, they were all popular in Sierra Leone. We started playing mainly Zairian style, which were extremely popular at the time'. (Stapleton and May 1987: 52) Congolese musicians arrived in Sierra Leone to compete with the existing influence of Highlife on bands like the Ticklers, a band who previously modelled themselves on the Ghanaian band the Ramblers (Collins 1994:229). Ry-Co Jazz settled in Sierra Leone in the early 1960s. 'A pachanga craze gripped the nation from 1959 to 1962. When Congolese band Ry-Co Jazz settled in the country, Sierra Leone went rumba-mad'. (Stapleton and May 1987:42)<sup>103</sup>

The other direction in which Congolese musicians headed was south from Lubumbashi to Lusaka in Zambia. Many of the musicians now in Kenya and Tanzania started their journey eastwards through Zambia. For instance the band Super Vox, later to be called Super Mazembe, who ended up becoming stars in Nairobi started their journey along this route in 1969. This remains an important route. In 1999 FM Academia, a Congolese band that now reside in Tanzania, travelled the same way. The Congolese entrepreneur KWM Kayembe from Lubumbashi owns the biggest chain of nightclubs, called *Chez Ntemba*, strung across Southern Africa and the DRC. He too started off heading for Lusaka to start a new nightclub in 1981 after starting his career in the trade in Lubumbashi. In 1967

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<sup>103</sup> Pachanga was a Cuban form made popular by Johnny Pacheco.

Ghaby Mumba, moved to Luanda and set up a Congolese outfit called OC Jazz and later a second outfit called Les Elite Bantou. He moved on to work in Zimbabwe. The popularity of *Rumba Congolaise* was reinforced on Zambian radio after independence.<sup>104</sup>

‘Zambian radio played mostly Congolese rumba which was the dominant style in Lusaka’s handful of up-market hotel ballrooms, frequented by the new elite and remaining colonials’ (Stapleton and May 1987: 222).

Zambia was a favourite destination for Congolese stars from Kinshasa. These were the good years while the copper price stayed high. Franco and Tabu Ley both included Zambia in their tour itinerary, as have many of the stars that have followed them.<sup>105</sup> At independence Zambia was one of the richest, fastest industrialising and urbanising countries in Africa. By 1969 Zambia had a GDP per capita of \$431 that was approaching that of the ‘middle-ranking’ countries like Portugal and above that of Brazil (Ferguson 1999: 6). There were workers with money to spend on nightlife and records. From Zambia Congolese musicians headed for Rhodesia and Botswana also with relatively healthy economies in this period, as well as Malawi. In the 1960s in Rhodesia Congolese musicians formed bands like OK Success, Lampoon Jazz and Vedette Jazz. They took on locals who picked up the style. The influence of these early bands, imported records and radio play continued after independence in 1980 in what became Zimbabwe. It can be heard in the 1980s work of Devera Ngwera who fused the Zairian sound with Shona, Ndebele and East African music. Between 1981 and 1987 they made eleven albums and fifty singles (Stapleton and

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<sup>104</sup> For a discussion of the Congolese Rumba craze in Zambia see Ferguson 1999: 218.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with former OK Jazz members – Madilu, Wuta Mayi, Sam Mangwana.

May 1987: 224). It could also be heard in a more direct form in the work of bands in which expatriate Congolese musicians predominated. The most popular of these was the Real Sounds of Africa, whose founder Ghaby Mumba, maintained the popularity of the band through the 1980s.<sup>106</sup> Visiting Congolese stars like Empire Bakuba could sell out expensive hotel shows for thousands of people.<sup>107</sup> John Lwanda, a Malawian scholar, says that Congolese music had made its presence felt in Malawi by the 1960s and continued to do so with each new wave of the music. 'In the 1980s and 1990s Congolese *soukous*-style music took hold across Malawi in a local form called *kwassa kwassa*. The *kwassa kwassa* rhythms and melodies blended particularly well with local time signatures' (Lwanda 1999: 534).<sup>108</sup>

Lwanda described in an interview how the influence of the dance that Kanda Bongo Man popularised in Malawi was not only felt in the towns. In villages acoustic bands could be heard playing a version of the music behind the *kwassa kwassa* craze, and children could be seen doing the dances.<sup>109</sup> Kanda Bongo Man says that Malawi was the country he toured in East Africa where the stadium crowds he performed to were amongst biggest and most enthusiastic in Africa. Kanda was amazed at the size of the 100,000 capacity audiences in the stadiums of the capital and the four regions.<sup>110</sup> In Angola Congolese music had a particular appeal in the 1960s as the music of independence and with the common tongue of Bakongo language in some songs.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> When I performed with Biggie Thembo's combo the Ocean City Band in 1991 in Harare it was still the *soukous* style that was most often requested of me.

<sup>107</sup> Personal observation.

<sup>108</sup> *Kwassa kwassa* became a generic term for Congolese music in East and Southern Africa in this period.

<sup>109</sup> Lwanda interviewed in Edinburgh 8/06/03

<sup>110</sup> Interviewed in Manchester 10/11/04

<sup>111</sup> Interview with Angolan BBC World Service Broadcaster Joal Boacim London 11/12/03 who was a student at this time in Angola.

The same Latin American records on the GV label that were so popular in Leopoldville in the 1950s were also much sought after in Luanda at the same time. People would pore over any new catalogue that came to town and try and get record shops to order them or persuade visiting sailors to bring them back from their travels. The popularity of the Latin music in both countries meant that when the Congolese reappropriated the music, or ‘domesticated’ it as John Lwanda puts it, Angolan ears were ripe for it, as were so many others around Africa. Uganda became the destination in the East for many Congolese musicians again because of its proximity. When Idi Amin took power in 1971 he made a special point of employing Congolese musicians. They donned Ugandan army uniforms and lived in army camps. Coco Kanyinda was one of those musicians who kept Amin’s troops entertained and in camp at weekends.<sup>112</sup> Tanzania and Kenya also fell within the orbit of Congolese musical missionaries.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Interviewed in London 06/03/04

<sup>113</sup> See Part II.



## 2. The Travels of the Bands

The travels of the bands, and of the individual musicians, have acted as a force for the diffusion of Congolese music that is as important as the music itself or its propagation on radio and record and is somewhat neglected in the literature.

Congolese musicians, when asked about the reasons for their travels and emigration, talk of their spirit of adventure and their fearlessness when facing the dangers of the road armed only with their music. This, and their desire to travel, they see as singularly Congolese traits. They also see their willingness to travel without a known destination or gigs booked as a sign of their self-belief and their belief in the power of their music, because it is their music upon which they are depending to survive.

*- Where does this spirit come from in the Congolese people do you think?*

*This spirit of adventure.*

**Kasheba** - Because we are sure of what we are doing. You must be sure of what you are doing. If you are sure of what you are doing, that it is good, then you will have confidence. If you are hesitant and say ‘ahh well perhaps...’ You see in the Bible it is said that Jesus walked on water. Me I would not have that confidence but maybe he did and he walked. If you go ‘oh perhaps this or that’ then you are finished, it’s finished, you will drown. That’s how it is. (Interviewed Dar Es Salaam 20/03/02).<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Ndala Kasheba is a central figure in the Congolese music scene in Tanzania.

‘We are the Jews of Africa’ is a phrase that is often used to get across this diasporic tendency. Dizzy Mandjeku suggested this dates back to the era of slave trading when Congolese people were forced to travel, either as slaves or to escape slave traders.<sup>115</sup> Sam Mangwana is known as the ‘pigeon voyageur’ both for his tendency to swap bands and for the extent of his travels. Sam Mangwana and Dizzy Mandjeku provide examples of how the intrepid travels of individual missionaries can contribute to the spread of the musical word. The intrepid travels of individuals are complemented by that of whole groups, bands who set off abroad having heard through the grapevine that things were good in Kenya, Cameroon, the Central African Republic or Sudan. Before the musicians started travelling abroad in the 1960s the beginnings of a tour circuit developed in the vast territory of the Belgian Congo. To begin with this was restricted to itinerant guitarists making their way up and down the vast length the Congo River and its tributaries. This is how Wendo Kolosoy started out after he began his recording career in 1948.

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<sup>115</sup> Interviewed Glasgow 27/10/04

### **The First generation.**



Wendo and Bowane performing.

Remmy Ongala, the well-known Congolese musician, who grew up in Kisangani, and Ndala Kasheba, from Lubumbashi, both settled in Tanzania. They remember being inspired by the arrival of Wendo and Bowane in their hometowns in the early 1950s. They described how Wendo was flown all over the country by the Belgians to play at big outdoor venues with a PA.<sup>116</sup> This was the first time many people outside of Leopoldville would have seen and heard the new urban hybrid music played live. This, combined with radio broadcasts, saw the start of the internal spread of the music in what is a vast country. It initiated the process of regional urban bands forming versions of the bands they loved from Leopoldville and gradually diminishing the extent of any nascent distinctions in the urban pop music

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<sup>116</sup> Interviewed in Dar es Salaam. Kasheba 20/03/02 Ongala 07/03/02

developing in Elizabethville. Elizabethville, as the centre of the copper mining industry and with its own radio broadcasting capacity had the means and the conditions for an autonomous and distinctive urban musical culture. From here the singer and guitarist Edouard Masengo was similarly sponsored to tour the country.<sup>117</sup> According to many of the Congolese musicians in East Africa it was the influence of South African Jazz that was strongest in Elizabethville/Lubumbashi in the 1950s influenced by a flow of records and tours by the Manhattan Brothers and Miriam Makeba.

*- Who were the South African groups that you saw in Lubumbashi in the 1950s?*

**King Ki Ki** - I followed the movement of South Africa. I liked that music as a child. That was the music I started with. From five years old until I was ten I started to interpret the style of South African music but we tried to change it. We tried to compose in Swahili but using that South African rhythm.

*- So in your group in Lubumbashi you did it in the style of the Manhattan brothers? Is that what gave you the inspiration?*

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<sup>117</sup> See Part II Chapter 2.

**King Ki Ki** - That's right. Exactly. (Interviewed Dar Es

Salaam 17/03/02).<sup>118</sup>

It was not only in the East of the Belgian Congo that South African music was popular in the 1950s. It was the Skylarks that stood out for Tabu Ley when as a young man he listened on the street corners to the public address systems set up by the Belgians to broadcast the station Congo Belge to the people of Leopoldville.

Personally I wasn't aware of the existence of any non-Congolese musicians until 1952 at the age of 12. The first of these artists developed in the heart of the Skylarks, a group of 5 South African women amongst whom I was to discover later was the illustrious Miriam Makeba... At that time the colonial administration had placed loud speakers at nearly all the major intersections in Leopoldville which from six in the morning blasted music out at full volume which inundated and rocked the whole city. The only foreign music that held my attention to the point of taking my breath away every time it was played was precisely that of the Skylarks.<sup>119</sup>

Kinshasa's influence was to prove too strong for Lubumbashi and local bands began to follow Kinshasa's lead in the 1960s and move away from the emulation of South African Jazz. According to Mantibah the failure to develop a distinctive urban musical voice in Lubumbashi can be attributed to the lack of investment in studios by

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<sup>118</sup> King Ki Ki (Full name Kikumbi Mwazanpangu b.1948) is one of the most respected members of the Congolese musical fraternity in Tanzania.

<sup>119</sup> Mpisi 2003: 92 Quoting "Parlons musique africaine", *Jubi Ley Magazine*, no. 001, January 2000, p.16. (My translation.)

entrepreneurs in Elizabethville in the crucial period of the 1950s in the manner of Greek businessmen in the capital (Mantibah M., Monsengo 2003: 13-17). This meant many of the most popular musicians in the regions headed for the capital or abroad to make a living. This process began in the first generation with the move of Paul Kamba from Elizabethville to Brazzaville and Edouard Masengo and Jean Bosco Mwenda to East Africa. This countrywide phenomenon of local bands emulating the music emanating from Kinshasa provided the musical nurseries for the musicians that would come to staff the hundreds of bands of the capital as well as East and Southern Africa. In Kinshasa alone fifteen years later in 1973 the magazine *Zaire* estimated that there were over 104 bands (Stewart 2000: 187) and *La Semaine Africaine* puts the figure at 360 by 1975 (Ewens 1994: 155). It is this massive groundswell of lesser-known bands that provided the fierce competition that resulted in such high standards for those that managed to achieve national and then international popularity. It also meant that any bandleader of a band that made it had no problems in finding experienced musicians when splits and defections occurred. Finally this fierce competition in Kisangani, Bukavu and Lubumbashi in the east, just as in Kinshasa in the west, has meant musicians have moved to neighbouring countries, where competition is not so fierce. The Ngoma studio used a mobile amplification system built into the vehicle they used for distribution to take their stars on the road to small venues, indoors and out around the country. As the photo above shows the stage could be very rudimentary and still entertain large crowds. Remmy Ongala described how the arrival of Wendo in his home-town of Kisangani heralded the beginning of state patronage for popular musicians.

- *Did Mobutu encourage the musicians to travel?*

**Ongala** - Yes, yes. It was the Belgians who started that. They took Wendo Kolosoy in an airplane and took him to every province of the country. They would do the publicity when he arrived. Around the 1950's.

- *Where did he play?*

**Ongala** - Wherever he could play. In festivals, in halls, at demonstrations, outside. That was in 1954. I was only six or seven maybe ten when I saw Wendo. That was when I began to love music. I thought how does he do that? He was a big inspiration for musicians all over the country. It was him who sang to us for independence.

'One fine day this country will change  
You will see it yourselves'

After a few years that's what happened (Interviewed in Dar es Salaam  
14/03/02).

Sam Mangwana confirmed this memory of Wendos' travels but added that he was also the first musician to make an international appearance sometime in the mid 1950s. He remembered him coming back from a tour of Cameroon with a horse he had been given as a gift by the Cameroonians. That said it is the individual guitarists

of Eastern Congo, Edouard Masengo, Jean Bosco Mwenda, Anatole Kasea and Antoine Mudunda who made the first international mark rather than Wendo, before the dawn of the larger dance band culture in Kinshasa. The residues of their musical legacy are not as strong in the years that followed as that of the larger modern dance bands but before these arrived the Congolese pioneers of East African guitar established beyond doubt the musical credentials of the Congolese. Amongst these Jean Bosco Mwenda looms large, especially in the annals of Nairobi's popular music. But it was not only Mwenda who made such a splash in the 1950s in East Africa. The very first record production plant in Nairobi, East African Records Ltd. had already started recording Edouard Masengo by 1958 (Harrev 1991:112). This was the beginning of a flood of Congolese artists that went to Nairobi to avail themselves of the local market of music lovers and the local production facilities independent of contractual obligations back home.<sup>120</sup>

The story of the travels of the second generation that follows is based on the tour circuit in the Congo that Wendo and Bowane first started. It relied on the evolving bar culture of the urban centres where the musicians began to make a living in the 1960s. Bars provided the natural habitat for the growth of the music and the oasis for the travelling musicians. Bar owners saw the financial gains to be made from investing in instruments. The owners made the profits when the sweet sounds enticed the punters in and they drank more after being lured to the dance floor. That has not changed. Bars continue to buy instruments and musicians continue to struggle to buy their own. Musicians remain dependent on the bars and studios for

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<sup>120</sup> Sleeve notes to CD *East of Africa* 1999. Melodica.



their equipment, even to play small gigs. The purchase of PA systems is even further beyond their means.

*-When did the bands start touring around Congo/Zaire?*

**Mandjeku** - Since Wendo and Bowane at the beginning.

*-When I've seen pictures of them in some old photos they are playing outside, no nightclub, just some planks set across some oil drums. No PA just their guitars.*

**Mandjeku** - No, no it started in bars where people were buying beer, and the musicians were given some too, sometimes white bars. Bowane then went travelling all over West Africa with a band called Vedette Jazz. He also went east to Lubumbashi and then to Zimbabwe, Rhodesia and Uganda.

*-When you were with Les Maquisards in the late 1960s where did you travel?*

**Mandjeku** - We went to Brazzaville and Gabon but we also travelled all over Zaire, Kisangani, Lubumbashi, and Bukavu all over the country. We have one song about getting stuck in Kisangani without the money to buy tickets home to Kinshasa. In the early 1960s there was Kalle and Franco, those two, who travelled a lot in the interior. What was good about the

period is that in every region, in every major town, there were good orchestras, ever since the modern instruments arrived in each regional capital, even in the 1950s. Like in Bas Zaire you would find D'Oliviera and musicians that came up from Angola. If you went to Lubumbashi you would find plenty of groups, including ones playing with a Gospel style. There was Gracia in Kisangani, who formed an orchestra called Singa Mwane, which means eight strings. There were good musicians everywhere but the big media, the record companies were concentrated in Kinshasa. It was from there that the music headed out into Africa and the entire world. In Les Festivals des Maquisards we would arrive somewhere without arranging it without instruments in the town or village. I had my first instrument when I was forty.

*-So when did the bars start to buy instruments, did you see them in the 1950s when you looked in through the windows as a child?*

**Mandjeku** - Already by then. It's hard to remember but there were already bands playing in the 1950s that wouldn't have owned their own instruments so the bars had to buy them. It became normal for a bar to buy instruments. For instance there was a bar owner called Oscar Kashama who owned a bar called the OK bar and he bought instruments that he put at Franco's disposal in 1956. So that's how the band came to be called OK jazz. It was in the red square. He had a good place to play...There were also people from the Gold Coast who had enough money to buy instruments in Kinshasa and

open bars...Musicians tell each other that in such and such a bar you will find instruments...So they'll say that in Uganda, for instance, there is a place called say the Starlight, go there and talk to the owner...

*-So when you arrive in a small town with a bar with an owner who has instruments how do you work it?*

**Mandjeku** - Say you arrive there as one or two and there's a band playing. You go to the bar and in a good moment you ask would it be alright if I play for a little... That's how I travelled in West Africa. That's how I travelled with Sam Mangwana when I found him in Abidjan. We would go into a nightclub. We would ask to play a little and then the band leader there would say "Hey you guys are good". In ten minutes you get an offer to play more.

*- When you started to play like that how would you be paid?*

**Mandjeku** - Some beer, something to eat, somewhere to sleep we had what we wanted, to carry on. We could go on to another country say to Cameroon. (Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04).

This interview gives a good idea of how the culture associated with the travels of Congolese musicians began to evolve in the 1950s. There was a synergy between the evolution of bar culture as the place for secular public life and the economic and

cultural evolution of band culture. The two forces fed into each other in Kinshasa and across the country and this provided the basis for the self-confidence of Congolese musicians heading further a field to the East, West and South in the 1960s. The fact that the skills they acquired and the content and style they played were simply more appealing to audiences is born out by the way in which Mandjeku describes their capacity to displace local musicians in local bands wherever they travelled, like hustlers posing as novices only to blow everybody away when they take to the stage. This is what has allowed Congolese musicians more than anything else to travel and settle all over the continent diffusing their music in the process.

## **The Second Generation:**

### **Joseph Kabesele and African Jazz, Tabu Ley and Afrisa, Franco and TPOK**

#### **Jazz**

‘Congo music enthralled the Senegalese and the Ugandan, it jumped regional boundaries and stylistic differences. It became a kind of Pan African Music’.

(Bender 1996:8)

The movements of the Congolese musicians can be broken down into those that settled for long periods in the rest of Africa and those that kept Kinshasa or Brazzaville as their base. Settling in other countries and establishing musical residency in the nightclubs and on the local airwaves of other African countries has had an enduring impact in the countries where this was achieved and this complemented the effects of the visiting stars from Kinshasa that have kept the pot bubbling in the capital. Like a musical church with its Vatican and Cardinals in Kinshasa, musical missionaries strong in the faith they have in their music have spread over the continent and set up missions to convert Africans everywhere to the *Rumba Congolaise* in all its different guises over the years. The travels already described of Tabu Ley’s Afrisa and Franco’s TPOK Jazz are the most important in this respect. There are other important bands.

Ry-Co Jazz is probably the first of the second-generation bands to establish itself outside the Congo in the 1960s. It was started by one of the founding fathers of

Congolese music, Henri Bowane, in the hope of making money as their manager and promoter.<sup>121</sup> The band headed for Bangui on a river steamer in 1958. They toured Central Africa throughout 1959 and Cameroon in 1960. Here the band split with Bowane heading further West taking most of the fifteen piece with him. A core of four musicians proceeded to keep the Ry-Co flame alive.<sup>122</sup> The band continued to burn hot across West Africa for the next four years as it travelled to the nightclubs of Ghana, Côte D'Ivoire, Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and the Gambia packing them out with the sound hitherto only heard on records and radio.<sup>123</sup> In Senegal they settled long enough to record for a French producer who distributed their music through the Vogue Label in Paris. They played the Afro Latin sound of the time – mambo, cha cha cha, rumba and merengue but also took a nod in the direction of Highlife and rock and roll occasionally. On more than one occasion along the way, the quartet reinforced itself with a local musician or two, a practice that transformed the band into a school for West African musicians to learn the Congolese method of playing (Stewart 2000:107). In 1967 they travelled to Martinique for a year. After being invited to record in Guadeloupe by producer Henri Debs their records hit the Caribbean market and they found themselves touring the islands and travelled on cruise ships to Puerto Rico, Grenada, Barbados, Guyana and Venezuela. Working with local musicians a new hybrid began to evolve which involved the *biguine* rhythm from Martinique with which French speaking Africa had more of a relationship, going back to the 1950s in the Congo (Storm Roberts 1999: 217). This contact provided a basis for the future development of Zouk. The Antillean band

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<sup>121</sup> The travels of the two big bands of the second generation *Afrisa* and *TPOK Jazz* have been covered in the pieces on those two bands.

<sup>122</sup> Freddy N'Kounkou, Mbilia Casino, Panda Gracia and Jerry Malekani

<sup>123</sup> Gary Stewart 1996. Sleeve notes to *Ry-Co Jazz: Rumba'Round Africa – Congo/Latin action from the 1960s* Interview with Jerry Malekani.

Kassav recorded with Ry-Co at this time. In the 1980s Kassav went on to fill stadiums all over West Africa, Latin music making the round trip to Africa back across the Atlantic to the Caribbean before returning triumphant in yet another new form care of the Congo's musical emissaries. Ry-Co itself split up in 1972.

The band credited as founding the second generation, African Jazz, was also in great demand in Africa in the early 1960s. The band was firing on all cylinders in this period before Tabu Ley and Dr. Nico left the band. In 1963, African Jazz conducted one of the first large scale tours of West Africa, lasting ten weeks and playing in the stadiums of Brazzaville, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Senegal, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and for one of their biggest fans Modibo Keita in Mali in the stadium in Bamako. Joseph Kabasele was the first to record in Belgium and perform outside Africa during the independence deliberations in February 1960. This is when he recorded the Africa wide hit *Independence Cha Cha Cha* and established his credentials as an intellectual and political activist.<sup>124</sup> The contacts with European record companies gave them access to the French and British colonies and ex-colonies where the major record companies based in France and Britain had marketing muscle.

Rock'a Mambo was another important band in the early 1960s. They were touring West Africa as early as 1963 when they went to Cameroon and Nigeria (Stewart 2000: 188). Vox Africa, fronted by the popular singer Bombenga, made their way

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<sup>124</sup> Ndaywel è Nziem 1998: 716 points to four Kabasele songs that establish his Lumumbist and nationalist credentials. *Moninga sepela indépendance* (My love rejoice, we are independant.) that became the national anthem at independence, *Afrika mobimba* (Africa Unite) , *Ebale ya Congo lopango* (the river Congo is not a frontier ....between two people but unites one) and *Matanga ya Modibo Keita* (the mourning of Modibo Keita.).

East to Uganda in the early 1960s where they based themselves for some time. Vox Africa went on to be one of the bands most favoured by leaders of the move to independence and proved popular in the 1960s and 1970s all over Africa.

**Bombenga** - I never stopped playing. In the 1970s I toured Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Mali, Togo, Gabon, Brazza, Uganda, Chad, CAR. Also Brussels, Paris, London and Germany. I have recorded over 1000 songs.<sup>125</sup> (Interviewed in Kinshasa 28/5/05)

Conga-Succès, fronted by Johnny Bokelo, and Négro-Succès in which Franco's brother Bavon Marie-Marie starred on guitar, and a band called Cobantou also made their mark in Congo's neighbours nightclubs and on their airwaves. Brazzaville's most important export was Les Bantous de la Capitale who toured West Africa relentlessly in the the 1960s and appeared at the World Festival of Black Arts in Dakar in April 1966.<sup>126</sup>

Orchestre Bantou earned its keep and fine reputation by touring. Starting with Togo's independence celebrations in April of 1960, Orchestre Bantou spent several months a year on the road. 'No African country could organize its independence day celebration without Orchestre Bantou', Guy-Léon Fylla declared. (Stewart 2000: 103)

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<sup>125</sup> Bombenga is still performing in Kinshasa every Friday night in a restaurant called the Inzia in Gombe at the time of writing.

<sup>126</sup> For an example of the fine clarinet playing of Jean Serge Essous and the balanced mix of both schools of Congolese music listen to track CD 1 track 13.



Most of the bands based in Kinshasa in the 1960s and 1970s never considered abandoning the motherland. But this did not stop them taking the opportunities that presented themselves to tour. A youth-band that was very popular in the early 1970s and was invited to tour internationally were the Trio Madjesi.<sup>127</sup> They dressed and danced in ways that pleased the youth crowd in Kinshasa, inspired by the visit of James Brown to Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in 1972. Brown was to return for the huge musical spectacle that accompanied Mobutu's greatest 'bread and circus' triumph, the fight between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman, dubbed the Rumble in the Jungle, in 1974. A star of the Trio, Loko 'Djeskain' Massengo, described how the band came to travel the continent and why he thinks the music of Trio Madjesi was so popular.

**Massengo** -We played nearly the whole of Africa everywhere. West Africa. Ivory Coast. Togo. Cameroon. Central Africa. Congo Brazzaville, Nigeria, Zambia and then Lubumbashi. This is in 1974. It was very popular, we have a big border with Zambia so our music was close. We had the opportunity to see Zambia twice. The first time was at the invitation of Kenneth Kaunda in 1969 with Vox Africa and then in 1974 with the Trio with our private management.

*- Did you have good management?*

**Massengo** - Oh yes very good management, a man called Manzenza.

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<sup>127</sup> The name Madjesi came from putting the names of the three principal stars together - Matadidi 'Mario' Mabele, Loko 'Djeskain' Massengo, and Bonghat 'Max Sinatra' Tshekabu – Mario, Djeskain and Sinatra.

- *Oh that's the same manager as Franco?*

**Massengo** - Yes that's right. He went from managing us to managing Franco. Sedidja was Tabu Ley's manager. He organised Tabu Ley's first trip to Europe.

- *I was thinking that part of the reason for the success of Congolese music was the quality of the Congolese promoters. It's difficult to organise a big tour in Africa. You have to have good contacts.*

**Massengo** - Yes exactly. It was a particular period. In those days the market worked, the economy worked, there weren't wars, there wasn't an economic crisis, and these were good conditions. In the West it was organised by our Congolese manager called Kallafa who now lives in Paris. When we did West African tours they were for say one month in Benin, which we made our *siege*, in a hotel called the Le Croix du Sud, and from there we went to Togo and Nigeria. We played in big halls. There were eleven of us including the soundman and the manager.

(Interviewed in Cheltenham, UK 06/03/04).

One of the most significant things in this interview is the reference to the 1969 visit by Loko Massengo to Zambia in 1969 with *Vox Africa* at the invitation of Kenneth Kaunda. This invitation represents one of the most important routes to Pan African

stardom for the Congolese in the 1960s. Post-independence leaders proved particularly keen on inviting the Congolese musicians to national celebrations, to perform in the big stadiums. This interview also draws our attention to the need for good promoters for successful tours, and these promoters rarely get the recognition they deserve for their role in the spread of the music.<sup>128</sup> Massengo also reminds us that the musicians were dependent, in part, on the stability of the new states and their willingness to use the resources to which the new leaders had gained control for mass entertainment, to subsidise the football, music, food and beer, that they felt sure would insure their continued popularity. Amongst those who set off and set up camp abroad permanently Sam Mangwana, and the *African All Stars* he helped form, are probably the best known in Africa, especially West Africa. Mangwana is famous for having taken the Kinshasa sound and transforming it for a fresh spate of continent-wide consumption in the late 1970s. He travelled first to Bangui in the Central African Republic and from there to Cameroon in 1978.

**Mangwana** – I travelled from Cameroon to Nigeria. Nigeria to Benin. Benin to Togo. Togo to Ghana. Ghana to the Ivory Coast. I went alone. When I arrived in a town I would present myself and I would do two or three little concerts. They would give me a little pocket money and I would carry on. I played with the local musicians. There were those that didn't believe it was Sam Mangwana because I had changed. The journey had deformed me, made me so thin... They all knew the Congolese records, Congolese pieces. I would ask them if they knew some OK jazz. Then they would play

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<sup>128</sup> See the following section on managers for an interview with Manzenza.

whatever way they liked to play and then I'd improvise. That way I'd pick it up, the feel of the way they played our music and theirs. Then when one arrives in Abidjan with all this musical baggage Boomf Whah, I was off.

*- I read that at that time in 1979 when you met up with Dizzy Mandjeku and formed the African All Stars in Abidjan you thought Congolese songs had got too long and you needed to make songs shorter and faster.*

**Mangwana** - There was Sonny Okosun, Nico Mbarga, King Oliver. I saw how well they were selling and the producers said to me 'You know you with your rumba there, the market's gone here for that, you shouldn't just sing in Lingala, you should sing in other languages, common languages'.

*- Is that the reason you started to sing in English and French and Swahili then? Like that song Chimurenga for Zimbabwe. Are there songs you've sung that have been more popular in each of these countries because of that? Like English songs in Anglophone Africa?*

**Mangwana** - Yes that's what happened (Interviewed Glasgow 27/10/04).

Mangwana had huge hits in West Africa after he recorded two albums worth of material in Nigeria and later in Paris and Abidjan, the city where he based himself. The songs on the 1978 album *Waka Waka* and the 1979 album *Maria Tebbo* established Mangwana as an international star in his own right independent of his

mentors Tabu Ley and Franco and he even had good sales in Anglophone Ghana and Nigeria with these albums.<sup>129</sup> He puts his success down to good marketing and distribution but he also made sure that his songs reached out to new audiences – *Bana ba Cameroun* and *Chimurenga Zimbabwe* being the most obvious examples on these two albums and with a liberal dose of French and English lyrics. That said the bulk of the songs on the two albums are still in Lingala and that didn't stop them becoming popular too. The catastrophic consequences of Zairianisation, its attempted reversal, Mobutu's kleptocratic management, the continued fall in the price of copper by 1979, the relative stability of West Africa and the success of Mangwana and the *All Stars* in West Africa made Abidjan and Lomé attractive destinations for Congolese musicians.



Sam Mangwana with the African All Stars in Lomé, Bénin 1979.  
(Pablo Lubadika, Kanyama 'Ringo' Moya Lotula, Lokassa Ya M'Bongo, Dizzy Mandjeku, Sam Mangwana, Tidiane, Bopol Mansiamina, Félé Diambouana, Syran Mbenza.)

Mangwana and the *All Stars* provided the musical recipe, Mangwana drawing on the fruits of his travels and Mandjeku synthesising his capacity to improvise in the Dr.

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<sup>129</sup> Ewens in sleeve notes to reissue of Maria Tebbo on the Sterns STCD3011. Other sources for the touring of this period include interviews with Bitshoumanou, 'Brazzos', Madilu, Manzenza, Roitelet and Wuta Mayi.

Nico tradition with the driving repetition of hook riffs that later came to characterise the guitar playing of the third generation.

Madilu was another semi-detached singer of the second generation who also toured with Franco and Tabu Ley. He can remember having played in practically every country in Africa, even in Madagascar with Franco. He recorded one of Franco's all time continental hits *Mario* in 1987. After Franco's death in 1989 he formed his own band, 'Madilu System', that has also toured the continent since then.<sup>130</sup> Franco's first trip to Tanzania was in 1972 when he played in all the main stadiums. He went again in 1982. He went to Kenya in 1982, 83, 84 and for the last time in 1987. He would perform like all the big stars in both the five star hotels and big stadiums. The keenness of African heads of state and government ministers to finance the international visits of the royalty of Congolese music meant the musicians avoided the costs and risks usually associated with international tours. Private jets were despatched to Kinshasa to bring the musicians direct and accommodation, food and transport on arrival would be on the house. The fact that these governments perceived the invitation of Congolese stars as a way to boost their own popularity at home demonstrated the appeal they were seen to have in the fields of value central to newly independent Africa of the 1960s and early 1970s - Pan Africanism and modernity, especially as these were expressed in fashionable, urbane youthfulness. The Congolese also produced the managers capable of organising the tours. They did this through both state officials and with local private promoters. Wuta Mayi (earlier known as Blaise Pasco Mayanda) worked with many of the important

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<sup>130</sup> Interviewed in Dar es Salaam 10/03/02.

musicians and bands of Congolese music history including Franco with whom he remembers doing tours that took him to France, Belgium, Cameroon, CAR, Angola, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Benin, Libreville and Gabon amongst others in the 1970s and 1980s. They always played stadiums or big halls. Wuta Mayi suggests that the distinction between state and market was often blurred.

**Wuta Mayi** - Manzenza was the group's manager. He didn't necessarily organise the tours he came along with us when we travelled. But we were always invited by the different promoters in each country. It depended. Sometimes by the state. Two times we were invited to Gabon by the state. That was by a man called M'Bongo who was the Minister of Information.

*- So it was him who telephoned the band to invite you to come?*

**Wuta Mayi** - No the second time it was organised by the minister responsible for internal security.

*- So it could be anybody in the government who could invite you?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Oh you know it was something that became a sort of 'business' for them.

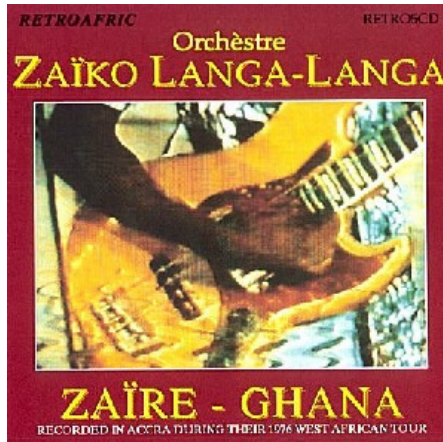
*- Because they could make money getting you over and charging for the concerts?*

**Wuta Mayi – Yes.**

(Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04)



## Travels of Third and Fourth generation



The bands that followed in the wake of Zaiko Langa Langa and its off shoots appealed to a new generation of young Africans in the 1980s, just as the bands of the second generation had in the 1960s and 1970s. To begin with the Zaiko generation did not compete internationally with the giants of the second generation. Tabu Ley's Afrisa and OK Jazz continued to play the concert halls and stadiums of Africa. Tabu Ley had the added attraction of his female star Mbilia Bel in the 1980s. Zaiko had begun to work the densely populated urban centres of the West African corridor by 1976 when they recorded the album pictured above.<sup>131</sup> Zaiko also represented Zaire in Lagos in 1977 at the FESTAC international festival. Individuals like Papa Wemba and Koffi Olomide that came out of the Zaiko school established their reputations and developed their organisational capacity to the point where they, like Tabu Ley and Franco, could fill stadiums and large concert halls wherever they went but over a decade later. In the late 1970s the newcomers to the international touring circuit

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<sup>131</sup> A song from the album, *Ngeli Ngeli*, can be heard on the attached CD (CD 2 track 1) which gives a good idea of the shift in orientation to the vocals and the guitars in the third generation.

were two women – Abeti Masekini and M’Pongo Love. These two women, with the help of patrons from the second generation, started touring West Africa. M’Pongo Love moved to Paris in the early 1980s and then settled in Gabon in 1984 from where she was well placed to keep touring West Africa. In the case of Masekini she was even able to pull off two major appearances in Paris at the Olympia and to establish herself in the field opened up by Tabu Ley with *Le Show* in West Africa the most popular and lucrative African market.

As the recording industry went into decline at home, along with the rest of the Zairian economy, the bands travelled abroad more consistently to tour and record. Zaiko recorded an album in Ghana in 1978 for instance and named the album ‘Zaiko Langa Langa live in Ghana’. In the course of their thirty year career they have performed in Congo, Gabon, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe and claim to have completed over one hundred international tours including Canada, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Japan and eight European countries.<sup>132</sup> Despite their status as the originators of the third generation it has been Kanda Bongo Man, Arlus Mabele of Loketo, Tshala Muana followed by Koffi Olomide that made a huge impression in East Africa in the late 1980s and 1990s. Zaiko made their first trip to Kenya in 1996 after a fifteen-year absence. The proliferation of bands with the Zaiko moniker mean there are conflicting memories of which Zaiko travelled where and when.<sup>133</sup> War in the 1990s drove more bands to tour abroad than in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

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<sup>132</sup> <http://www.zaikolangalanga.com/EngZaikoTournees.htm>

<sup>133</sup> Tanzania has been visited only once by Zaiko in 2000 but they never played because the promoter didn’t have the money. However other Zaiko incarnations have made the trip East.

- *Do you think foreign tours are more important than ones here at home?*

**N'Yoka Longo** - At the level of the interior, with the war and the occupation of two thirds of the country we cannot go further than Bas Congo and Bandundu. That's why we think more often about going abroad because it opens up far more possibilities at the promotional and commercial levels.  
(Africultures no. 53: 44)

Kanda Bongo Man represents a slightly different strain in the spread of Congolese music because although he started out in Kinshasa his success in Africa, especially East Africa, has come after having established himself in Europe. This led to gigs all over Africa.<sup>134</sup> His first visit to Kenya was in 1991 and Tanzania in 1992 connected to visits to Zambia, Malawi and South Africa.

Those that rank beside Kanda in terms of African touring include Awilo Longomba, the aforementioned Defao, Arlus Mabele, the bands Loketo and Les Quatres Étoiles, Papa Wemba and Koffi Olomide and his band Quartier Latin. The band Loketo (hip) and Arlus Mabele played in Tanzania in 1989 and 1994. They played in the Kilimanjaro Hotel and the large Diamond Hall. Awilo Longomba did major tours of East Africa in 2000 and 2001, when he played in the eight regions of Tanzania. General Defao has played in Tanzania at least three times, in 2001 including Zanzibar in his itinerary.<sup>135</sup> In 2000 Defao played in the Nairobi Hilton and Balas

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<sup>134</sup> Interviewed in Manchester: 18/11/04

<sup>135</sup> In 1998 Defao was imprisoned in Tanzania for non payment of hotel bills and again in Kenya in 2002, after the Tanzanian government paid him \$40 000 for one big concert. According to rumours

Hotel. Koffi Olomide and his band Quartier Latin toured extensively in Africa since the arrival of their first album *Dieu Voit Tout* in 1986. They are one of the few bands to have performed in South Africa in 1998. Koffi took over from Kanda as the most prominent star in East Africa in the mid to late nineties. In Tanzania he performed three times in 1994 in the National Stadium, 1996 and in 1999. He performed every year from 1993 to 1998 in Kenya. Most recently Koffi has also performed in Nigeria in 2002.

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he spent all the money on two snake skin suits that cost him \$15 000 each, and he didn't have enough left for the bills.

## **The Fourth Generation**

The fourth generation have again revitalised the touring fortunes of Congolese bands on the continent, injecting a new vitality and that most marketable of assets – youth – into the popular urban music coming out of Kinshasa. Wenge Musica and its many offshoots have continued to tour the continent like the Congolese musicians of earlier generations the most successful being Werra Son and J.B. Mpiana. Werra Son reeled off the names of over a dozen African countries where he had played in the national stadiums including Gabon, Cameroon, four times in Zambia, the Citadel stadium in Angola, Benin, three times in Tanzania and four times in Kenya, Chad, Rwanda and Burundi, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Senegal with the original Wenge, Burkina Faso and South Africa at the Kora awards.<sup>136</sup> Werra Son travelled to Sun City to entertain the participants at the inter Congolese dialogue and when he returned performed at a festival for peace in central Kinshasa performing he claimed to 600,000 people. The same principles hold for their success as the previous generation but in this generation the bands can rely less and less on the states of African countries to provide the financial backing to stage large shows. As the following interview indicates it is the market and promotion that now hold sway and the musicians are only too aware of this fact. They now have a new tool in the form of the video clip with which to promote themselves prior to arrival.

**Mpiana** - The success that we have in each place we perform depends on the resources the promoter spends out on us. For instance in Cameroon we are

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<sup>136</sup> Interviewed in Kinshasa 14/09/05

loved, everywhere in Chad, Zambia and Zimbabwe. We've played in the biggest stadiums in all these countries. We are Francophone and they are Anglophone but it doesn't matter because there was very good promotion there and because people know us from the video clips on the TV, the stadium was completely full last year 2003, in Harare. In Mali it worked well because of the promoters. It's the same even at home. If you don't do publicity the people don't come. I'm sure it's the same for you.

*- But don't you have to be popular first? If you do all this publicity for a group that is not well known people aren't going to come. For instance in Mali how had people heard of you before you arrived?*

**Mpiana** - We have made good records that have sold well. We have got to where we are today first of all because of all the hard work that we have put in, so much hard work, putting out albums.

(Interviewed Johannesburg 25/03/04)

## Analysis.

At present there appears to be little in the way of a theoretical framework in which to place this spread in Africa of Congolese music. Malm provides a set of analytical distinctions (Malm 1993). She differentiates four types of cultural interaction; ‘cultural exchange’ - that is exchange, without domination; ‘cultural dominance’ - the imposition of musical practices and norms by a dominant group on those they attempt to dominate; ‘cultural imperialism’ characterised by unequal exchange involving the movement of musicians, and profits from their music, from poor to rich countries by multinational record companies as for example with Jamaican reggae; and ‘transculturation’ which she sees as the power of transnational corporations to penetrate world wide markets and the general increase in the *mediaization* of music as new technologies have evolved. Downloading MP3s off the internet is the latest such development. She sees the origin of transcultural music as urban and hybrid, without homogenous ethnic roots, and its dissemination and influence as transnational. The example she gives is that of disco music in the 1970s. Robinson, Buck and Cuthbert largely concur with this typology adding a fifth possibility ‘that imported music can stand side by side with locally originated music’ (1991: 21).<sup>137</sup>

It is hard to place the influence of Congolese music in Africa within this typology as the typology seems to derive most of its content from the relation of musicians to technology and of countries in unequal economic and political relations with each

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<sup>137</sup> These authors also schematise a four stage process through which musicians in the ‘periphery’ supposedly go in musical adaptation to the predominantly one way flow of music from the Western dominated culture industries in the ‘core’ – listening and absorbing, imitating, indigenizing followed by eclecticism and interchange.

other either side of the history of twentieth century imperialism. Congolese musicians have by contrast achieved their continent-wide popularity in a period when their country has paradoxically fallen apart politically and economically. The continental spread of the music just outlined has occurred in spite of this collapse. Malm's focus on the mediaization of music in the late twentieth century is an important factor in this popularity to which we will turn. The studio, the radio, TV, video, DVD and Internet have all been important for the spread of Congolese music. But the force of transnational corporations has not backed this to anything like the extent that it has backed American, European and Caribbean music – the reggae and disco music Malm mentions for instance. Reggae and disco have both been very popular in Africa, as have their major stars - Michael Jackson and Bob Marley. The story of the work of Congolese musicians and their promoters who have been touring the continent relentlessly, as well as emigrating and settling in neighbouring countries, has been the human force that has maintained their popularity despite the deterioration of their homeland's economic and political health. The capital driven mediaization that characterises the spread of music by 'transculturation' that Malm describes is somewhat different from the spread of Congolese music by this human force. The elements that distinguish cultural imperialism, dominance and exchange for Malm are not those which characterise the spread of Congolese music. The profits made by Congolese musicians in Africa have moved between African countries of similar economic levels, or even between a relatively wealthy country like Gabon judged in per capita terms and a far poorer one judged by the same standard in the Congos. The Congolese are not economically or politically dominant in the countries to which they have moved. Indeed quite the opposite, having neither



the backing of a stable home country or citizenship in the countries to which they move. Cultural exchange has not been the main mode of musical interaction though it has occurred. Congolese musicians have made some musical adaptations to the countries to which they have moved, but, as Kanda Bongo Man says, it is the Congolese-ness of his music that makes it marketable in Africa, meaning that he sticks to Lingala even in places like East Africa where he can speak the language – Swahili. Manuel (1992) comments on this weakness in this kind of typology. ‘The focus on the interactions of the “core and periphery” is overly simplistic in equating the West with the core, since for several decades, there can be seen to have existed *several* non-Western genres (e.g., Hindi film song, Cairo-based mainstream Arab styles, Congolese and Cuban dance music) that have functioned as international “cores” in their own fashion, in a complex interaction with Western music and lesser regional substyles’. (Manuel 1992: 157)

## **Chapter Two: The Land of the Seducer**

### **2:1 The Historical Background**

Though the birth of Congolese rumba began as much in Brazzaville as in Leopoldville it is bands from Kinshasa that have dominated its continental spread.<sup>138</sup> So it is to the factors in the Belgian Congo and Zaire that have contributed to the development of Congolese rumba and its diffusion that we now turn. These factors are by no means purely musical. Musicians have always relied on the existence of a functioning transport system and a minimal level of security for the diffusion of their music through touring. These are not factors that can be taken for granted. Urban population concentrations and the evolution of bar culture are also important factors.

The building of a national transport network, first by river, then road, then rail, then air by the Belgian colonial regime made it possible for musicians to tour inside the Belgian Congo and so reach its borders to travel abroad. Transport was fundamental to King Leopold's initial attempts to colonise the region at the end of the nineteenth century, especially the link between Leopoldville and the coast.<sup>139</sup> The line from Katanga to Port-Franqui was completed in 1928, providing another route for the movement of musicians (Ndaywel è Nziem 1998: 430-452).<sup>140</sup> Air links were developed between Leopoldville and Belgium in the 1930s, which encouraged the arrival of Belgian colonists, as well as providing a means for Congolese musicians in

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<sup>138</sup> Both Martin 1996 and Stewart 2000 give due weight to the role Brazzaville has played in this development.

<sup>139</sup> The first stage of Leopold's imperial project between 1879 and 1884 centred on building a road to cover the 250 miles through the Crystal Mountains from the coast to the point where the great river becomes navigable. This is where Leopoldville first grew. Hothschild 1998: 68-70 The building of the railroad to the coast between 1889 and 1898 cost even more lives than the road. Ibid: 170

<sup>140</sup> Ndaywel è Nziem provides the best overview of the development of the transport system.

the 1960s to begin their tours of the continent. In the Second World War SABENA developed routes all over the country. The economic demands on the colony for the Belgian war effort drove indigenous industrialisation. They built 47 aerodromes in the province of Leopoldville, 28 in the province of Equator, 17 in Katanga and 27 in Kasai (Ibid 447). These were to provide the means by which Wendo Kolosoy was to fly around the country in the 1950s.

The post war period of colonial rule saw the authorities beginning to justify their presence in terms of the development they were bringing to their colonies and also as a means to stave off demands for independence (Stengers 1988: 315). This meant investment not in representative democracy but infrastructure of which roads and communications formed a significant part, alongside health, education and industry (Ndaywel è Nziem 1998: 444-449). In this respect the Belgian authorities did not differ from their British and French counterparts (Nugent 2004: 23-49). That investment was also driven by the desire for profit and at the expense of Congolese labour. At independence literally a handful of the Congolese earned more than \$25 a month (Young 1966: 36). Nonetheless it provided the economic basis for the development of the music industry.

Riverboats have remained the principal means of transport for most people, particularly since independence as the road and rail network have deteriorated.<sup>141</sup>

The ready-made river highway provided the route by which the pioneers of Congolese music made their way to the Central African Republic in the 1950s. It is

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<sup>141</sup> See the Societe Nationale des Chemins de Fer du Congo website for details of the deterioration of rail network much of which dates from 1927: <http://www.ic-lubum.cd/.../sncc/texte/sncchome.htm>

also the route musicians from the East used to make their way to the musical Mecca of Kinshasa from Kisangani, Mbuji Mayi and Lubumbashi. It binds the country together even in the absence of a functioning state. For the formative period of Congolese nationhood the river network has provided a practical and symbolic coherence to the country. The invasion of Kabila's forces from the East in 1997 and the downfall of Mobutu, followed by civil war, finally saw the end of the first transport system to have been set up by the colonisers - regular passenger ferries.<sup>142</sup> It has been replaced by what can be seen below – a tugboat pushing four or five large barges on which people cook and camp for several weeks as they travel thousands of miles up and down river.



River Traffic in 2006.

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<sup>142</sup> Interviews with Kinois 2006.

## 2:2 'I Learnt to Sing in Church'

The Church has made an important contribution to the musical development of the Congo. It is in Church that people learn and practise their singing. The institutional and communal strength of the hugely diverse forms religion has taken in the Congo has provided an important musical resource for the general strength of Congolese musical culture. There has been an explosion of Pentecostal churches in the last ten years in Kinshasa (Dervish 1996; De Boeck 2004: 95-112) in which the musical culture of the bar and the church overlap. Electric church bands fire the enthusiasm of their congregations to join in sacred song by using the most recent secular melodies (De Boeck 2004: 95). This represents the collapse of the distinction the Catholic Church worked so hard to build between the secular, the ancestral and the sacred in the colonial era (Young and Turner 1985: 66).<sup>143</sup> This was the Church with the most power and 40% of the population as active followers at independence. The Catholic Church had begun to develop distinctive Congolese musical and liturgical forms, especially in the use of the vernacular, before independence (Sundkler and Steed 2000: 757- 767).<sup>144</sup>

Catholicism has not been the only Christian tradition to be brought to the region.

Protestant missionaries waving Bibles have been making their way to the region

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<sup>143</sup> See Young 1965 for more on the penetration of Congolese society by the combined power of the Belgian colonial State, the Catholic Church and the corporations, especially the largest "La Société Générale de Belgique". Musicians attested to how their Catholic teachers in the colonial era frowned on secular music. Tabu Ley risked expulsion if his secular musical activities had been discovered while still at school in the 1950s.

<sup>144</sup> See Yates 1980 on the relationship between the Churches and language especially in their competition for converts with the Protestants. See also Ndaywel è Nziem 1998.

since the first colonial invaders arrived waving guns, and it was these missionaries who lay behind the flow of information concerning atrocities committed by King Leopold's agents at the turn of the century.<sup>145</sup> Competition between the Catholic and Protestant Churches was an important feature of the early phase of colonial history. Protestant churches, like the Catholics have also developed distinctively Congolese music and liturgy (Samarin 1986). The Salvation Army, in which Sam Mangwana learnt to sing, has always supported a strong tradition of brass players. The independent Congolese Churches have also had an important influence on the musical heritage and wealth of the Congolese. The Kimbanguists, like the Salvation Army, are renowned for their brass bands.<sup>146</sup> Verckys first picked up the trumpet and how to read music in the horn section of the Kimbanguist Church in the 1950s. He moved from the church to the bar, to play rock and roll and twist after independence.<sup>147</sup>

Many of the most famous singers in the history of Congolese music learnt their craft singing in choirs in the Catholic Church. This training has proved itself for those considered to have the best control and range in their voices – Kabasele, Tabu Ley, Franc Lessan, Vicky Longomba, Iziedi Roger and Madiata and from the next generation Madilu, Papa Wemba and Pépé Kallé amongst others (Tchebwa 1996: 212). The ranks of the first and second generation have more singers that started in church because subsequent generations grew up in a context in the two capitals where there were hundreds of small bands in which to learn from an early age. With

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<sup>145</sup> Hochschild 1998: 172-3, 217-218 especially on the role of Edmund Morel and William Sheppard.

<sup>146</sup> MacGaffey: 1993 and MacKay: 1987 on the Kimbanguist Church.

<sup>147</sup> Interviewed in Kinshasa 24/09/05. This is when Franco found and recruited Verckys in 1963 Ewens 1994: 112 makes the mistake that Verckys came straight from the Church into Franco's band.

the explosion of Pentecostal Churches in the 1990s the Church is continuing its role as a training ground (Dervisch 1996). It is in a Protestant Church that Werra Son first learnt to sing.<sup>148</sup>

Belgian missionaries first formed choirs in the 1920s (Mpisi 2003: 98). The high quality of the musical training provided by the Catholic fathers stood in contrast, according to some informants, to the low level of education that the majority of pupils ever received in other subjects. This musical training meant students like Tabu Ley and Kabesele acquired skills they could transfer into their work in secular music. According to Sam Mangwana some missionaries, like those who taught him in the Salvation Army also considered teaching jazz, French variety songs and reading music worthwhile for the musical development of their students.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Interviewed in Kinshasa 18/09/05

<sup>149</sup> Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04

### **2:3 1960-67. The Post-independence Birth of National Music - The rise of the capital and the decline of the regions in the wars of Secession**

There were four other regional capitals at the moment of independence in the Belgian Congo that had their own musical life, but which failed to develop a music industry or an independent sound. All the Congolese musicians from the regional capitals were emphatic on one point. Modern urban bands of the 1960s in the regions were part of the same musical tradition as that which was developing in Leopoldville/Kinshasa and Brazzaville. This modern Congolese music that came into being is pan-Congolese in a way that is not to be found elsewhere on the continent. This was precisely one of the reasons Sam Mangwana gave for the dominance of Congolese music – that unlike the Nigerians who have developed music that reflects the political divisions of Yoruba, Ibo and Hausa the Congolese developed a truly national music.<sup>150</sup> The period in which its modern form really crystallised in the 1960s is the time when the country was most in danger of falling apart, when secessionist politics, violence and counter-violence, were at their height. So why was there not a divided music developing in the 1960s as occurred elsewhere in Africa, that reflected the divided politics, different languages, ethnic tensions and huge distance from Eastern to Western Congo?

Part of the answer lies paradoxically precisely in that violence. Violence disrupted urban life in the regional capitals. After the riots that proceeded independence the

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<sup>150</sup> Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04. The same can be said of the other potential competitors South Africa and Nigeria.



capital was relatively peaceful. Money and people flowed to the capital down the great river to escape the deteriorating security situation in the regions. The population of the capital doubled from 420,000 in 1960 to 1.4 million by 1970 while Lubumbashi went from 200,000 to 330,000 in the same period.<sup>151</sup> Secondly, although there were regional radio stations, none had the continent-wide transmission capacity of those in Brazzaville and Kinshasa. The regional stations acted as feeder stations for transmissions from the capitals, especially when it came to the music that filled up so much of the air-time (Tchebwa 1996: 219-224). In the newly independent Congo-Kinshasa news bulletins were in the official language French, or less frequently translated into the main national languages (Tshiluba, Kikongo, Swahili and Lingala) but music remained predominantly in Lingala. The huge *Union Minière de Haute Katanga* that controlled the lucrative mining of copper was based in Katanga. But instead of diversification into the leisure industry they were accused by the UN in Congo of ‘manufacturing bombs and armoured vehicles for the Katangan forces’ of Moïse Tshombe fighting for Katangan independence (O’Ballance 2000:58). In Kasai Albert Kalonji fought for independence and ethnic conflict between the Lulua and Tchokwe erupted. In Oriental Lumumba loyalists, led by Antoine Gizenga, fought the central government in Stanleyville and Bukavu (O’Ballance 2000:83).<sup>152</sup> While the battle of words was fought in Leopoldville the battle of bullets was fought on the streets of Elizabethville in Katanga, of Stanleyville in Oriental, of Bukavu in Kivu and of Luluaborg in Kasai. Conditions were not conducive to nightlife and an independent modern music or the industry to

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<sup>151</sup> <http://esa.un.org/unup/index>

<sup>152</sup> Reprisals and counter reprisals led to the elimination of ‘all local political leaders, administrators, professional men and those with further education, virtually creating an educational and administrative desert’.

back it. This exacerbated the trend towards the concentration of commercial activity associated with popular culture in the capital and against a regionalisation of musical forces. As an example we can take the case of the Benetar brothers. Crucial to the development of Congolese music was the role of Greek and in this case Jewish entrepreneurs in building studios in Leopoldville in the 1950s. The Benetar brothers built an important studio and a record label called OPIKA. The base of their main commercial activities was however in Elizabethville servicing the copper mining industry. Even entrepreneurs like the Benetars, based in the East, chose to base their musical operations in the West and did nothing to replicate the studio facilities they had built in Leopoldville in the commercial centre of Elizabethville.<sup>153</sup> In addition to this commercial concentration musicians headed from all four regions for Leopoldville or to neighbouring countries where there was stability and lucrative markets instead of war.<sup>154</sup> What they took with them was the sound that was coming out of Leopoldville heard over the radio, on record and from touring bands from the capital. The music was quickly assimilated and then reproduced by local bands around the vast country.

This establishment of a country wide musical force displaced the influence of powerful music from elsewhere in the world and in Africa. This change is particularly striking in Elizabethville, which up to this period had been more influenced by urban music moving north from South Africa and Rhodesia. This was the era when modern Congolese bands, or as they called them orchestras, flourished in Leopoldville and the major competing schools of African Jazz and OK jazz

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<sup>153</sup> Interview with friend of the Benetars. Kinshasa 20/09/05

<sup>154</sup> Leopoldville was only renamed Kinshasa, Stanleyville Kisangani and Elizabethville Lubumbashi in 1966.

defined their sounds. They flourished in part because the peace in Leopoldville and euphoria after independence were conducive to an explosion of creative expression. Bars and bands proliferated. The young people that flooded to the nightspots were no longer constrained by the racist colonial control on personal movement in the city at night. There was also fresh money coming in with the huge UN presence – the ONUC force required rest and recreation after all. This was also the period when local political leaders started to taste the economic fruits of independence and they spent their money on the musicians who had provided the soundtrack to the struggle for independence – African Jazz in particular.

The disruption to the development of what might have been a competing musical force by secessionist struggle in Katanga is ironic. Jean Bosco Mwenda with his Swahili classics of the 1940s and 1950s, and with his distinctive guitar style, had laid the first generation groundwork for a Swahili genre.<sup>155</sup> Combine this with the influence of South African jazz and the urban market that evolved in Elizabethville with the mining industry, and you have a potential competitor to the all-conquering Lingala rumba from the capital. But Leopoldville faced no real competitor from the East. The secessionist disruption helped in allowing the formation of a musical force that came to be considered and claimed by musicians in the East as truly national by the late 1960s, to the extent that they were willing and able to compose most of their songs in Lingala and in the style developed in the West of the country. Unity is strength. The bands that headed East from Lubumbashi, Bukavu and Kisangani in the 1960s for Nairobi, Kampala, Kigali, Dar Es Salaam and south to Lusaka started

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<sup>155</sup> Mwenda's work is still available. See for instance Mwenda wa Bayeke. Jean Bosco: African guitar legend the studio album. Released on Mountain Cat# MOU00762

out singing the songs they had composed in Lingala back home even though they came from Swahili speaking areas. So part of the explanation for the paradox of Congolese musical unity and the contribution this has made to its continental success is another paradox. After independence, secessionist violence actually led to the weakening of the regions, and the strengthening of Kinshasa.

The contrast between the divisions in say Nigerian and South African popular music is striking. The creation of a musical form that became properly national in Zaire is critical in explaining its continental spread. First this was the basis for the four generations. The generations provided the changes that are so much a feature of popularity in modern urban markets. Second, the concerted energies of some of Africa's finest musicians in towns right across the vast country went into the sustenance of a single music. Third, the national unity meant for other Africans the music was immediately identifiable with a country rather than an ethnic group and in the period following independence in 1960 this provided an important symbol of African modernity expressed in musical nationhood, a nationhood still denied for some like Angola. The language of song, Lingala, became national and was still African. No other African country could boast an indigenous language that achieved the same thing. Swahili is not peculiar to one country or one musical style. There is a marked contrast in mainland Swahili dance music and Swahili *taarab* music for instance. Swahili, although a Bantu language, retains historic associations through Zanzibar and the Omani sultanates with the Middle East and Arabic vocabulary. Lingala has the advantage for the Congolese that it is singularly identified with their music. Indeed in Kenya it is known as Lingala music. This clarity in the identity of

Congolese music is unsurpassed in Africa and this clarity has been central to its continental success.

## 2:4 Patronage, Zairianisation and Authenticity.



After independence vertical ties of patronage between politicians and the stars of Congolese music were formed.<sup>156</sup> These ties were important for the economic and diplomatic backing of foreign tours, for the direct contacts provided to heads of state and for the status the close relationship accorded musicians. This close relationship goes back to the common social space occupied by musicians and the *hommes connus* of the independence movement in the capital.

In the volatile year of 1960, music and politics could hardly remain separate.

Kabesele supported Lumumba and according to Tabu Ley, often took him around

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<sup>156</sup> The whole thesis put forward by Chabal and Daloz concerning the state in Africa rests on the primacy of such ties over horizontal associations such as class interest. Daloz and Chabal 1999.

town in his big white convertible with young Tabu Ley himself at the wheel.

(Stewart 2000: 90)

Wendo Kolosoy talks of how close he was to Lumumba.

**Wendo** - Ohhhh. Lumumba, 1940s. We were together all the time, the same generation. Often he came to my place, and he slept. We slept together. We drank together. We ate together.<sup>157</sup>

After independence Wendo suffered because he never sang Mobutu's praises and it has only been since the arrival of the Kabilas that this monument of the first generation has once again received state recognition.<sup>158</sup> Patronage involves reciprocity between patrons and their clients. The failure to reciprocate has direct consequences. So between 1960 and 1965 musicians began to sing for politicians, naming them personally. This is now a tradition for which there are specific financial rates dependent on the status of the musicians.<sup>159</sup> Franco, despite his subsequent close association with Mobutu, was a supporter of Moise Tshombe immediately after independence.<sup>160</sup> Kabesele's African Jazz, the most popular band in Africa at the time of independence, was closely associated with Lumumba. The *Independence Cha Cha Cha* listed by name the significant politicians that negotiated independence with the loudest praise going to Lumumba. The instability in the

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<sup>157</sup> Eyre 2005. [afropop.org/multi/interview/ID/27](http://afropop.org/multi/interview/ID/27)

<sup>158</sup> See the glossy presentation produced by the government in the run up to elections. Republique Democratique du Congo. 2005: 134-140

<sup>159</sup> The naming of people in song, called *libandas*, is now a substantial source of revenue for the likes of Madilu. Listen to his 2004 album *Le Tenant du Titre* for examples of songs filled with *libandas*. See the Economist 18/12/03 that discusses this practice in recent years.

<sup>160</sup> Manzenza interviewed in Brazzaville 25/09/05

country as a whole meant there were five years in which it was not clear whose praises should be sung as politicians fought for control of the new nation. Once Mobutu assumed power in 1965 the man whose praises were to be sung became only too apparent, as did the source from which patronage would now flow.

The revenue from copper mining in Katanga and diamonds in Kasai provided Mobutu's main cash cows, both of which he milked persistently. In the case of copper a mixture of collapsing prices and an absence of reinvestment killed the golden goose in the late 1970s.<sup>161</sup> In 1974 87% of export earnings were coming from copper.<sup>162</sup> Mobutu funded his own conspicuous consumption and patronage networks by 'nationalising' these resources. Printing money was the third main source of state finance and in the 1990s Mobutu's abuse of this state responsibility led to some of the most sustained and spectacular hyperinflation any country has ever suffered.<sup>163</sup> But for the first ten crucial years of Mobutu's rule the money flowed to musicians. Instruments were bought, cars were given as gifts, flights were provided, buildings for clubs and studios were donated, and fat wads of cash were passed over unrecorded.<sup>164</sup> It was not only Mobutu who provided patronage for the musicians. To sustain his popularity in his home region of Equateur, Justin Bomboko, the foreign minister, would pay \$5000 a show for Franco to tour there in the 1970s.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Ndaywel è Nziem 1998. Nzongola. 2002. Young and Turner 1985: 181

<sup>162</sup> See Young and Turner 1985: 276-325 on economic policy under Mobutu and p.294 on copper's contribution to the national budget.

<sup>163</sup> Young and Turner 1985:71-76. The four figure inflation of the 1990s was preceded by inflation hitting 60% in 1973. Thereafter it continued to rise, reaching the hundreds in the 1980s.

<sup>164</sup> Manzenza Brazzaville 18/09/2005

<sup>165</sup> *ibid*



**Mandjeku** - Justin Bomboko, the Minister of Foreign Affairs bought the instruments for Vox Africa in 1967. Or Edouard Bulundwe, he was the governor of Katanga. He bought the instruments for Franco in the 1960s. He it did it so Franco would sing his praises and mention his name in songs. Mobutu became the biggest sponsor of the bands. He bought instruments for Tabu Ley once he had his own band. With only one party, you could sing for Mobutu, one sole leader, one sole sponsor, it worked. Mobutu didn't do it that openly. He just handed over the cash. This is the way it worked. He would ask a band to accompany the president to Brussels for instance, or Paris. They would say 'President, we have no instruments'. He would say 'OK, here's the money, go and choose them yourselves, whatever you want'.

*- So after these gifts were made it was the bandleaders that owned the instruments not the individual musicians, is that right?*

**Mandjeku** - Exactly. It was Franco, Tabu Ley and Verckys who were the three big owners in the beginning of modern Congolese music. (Interviewed Glasgow 27/10/04)

One of the people best placed to have observed how much money changed hands was Franco's manager. Franco didn't have a full time manager until the arrival of Manzenza-Nsala MuNsala in 1974.

**Manzenza** - Franco did the song *Votez Verre* in 1972 for Mobutu for his elections.<sup>166</sup> Mobutu said to Franco you have done this song for me. Now give me your bill. So Franco said to me what should I put on this bill? I said \$22,000. That was so much. With that money Franco bought his bus, two lorries, a mini bus and second hand Triumphs for the band. All with that one song. Mobutu didn't question the bill. He saw it, laughed and paid... Usually when I toured with Franco in the interior it was under the auspices of the MPR (Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution ), so there was no problem with costs. They paid for everything and gave us a fee. (Interviewed in Brazzaville 25/09/2005)

Manzenza went on to detail how the MPR also supported tours by Tabu Ley, Dr Nico, Negro Succès, African Jazz while the international fortunes of bands from Brazzaville began to decline being tied into a smaller circle of socialist countries and without the entrepreneurialism Mobutu fostered.<sup>167</sup> The extent of Mobutu's belief in Franco's powers went beyond electioneering.

**Manzenza** - Mobutu liked to use Franco when there was discontent. That was how we were sent to Katanga in 1976. That was right after our decoration with the Order of the Leopard. We did Lukasi, Kolwezi and Lubumbashi. The soldiers were angry at that time. They weren't paid. We went to play in the military camps in MPR uniforms. Mobutu paid for everything. He paid better than anybody else.

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<sup>166</sup> Others put the date for this song as 1968.

<sup>167</sup> The Congolese were told to *se débrouiller*, to sort themselves out. This became the unwritten 'article 15' of the constitution or 'system D'.

- *Did you have a contract?*

**Manzenza** - A contract? Mobutu?! He called Franco and said you are going to Katanga that was the contract. He could pay you \$10,000 for a trip like that with all the expenses paid. He really gave presents. The governor of Katanga was Asumani at the time, a big Mobutist, but a Katangan. We went three times. The second time was in 1977. The soldiers were so happy to see us even though they weren't paid. If you started at eight in the evening you would go on until six in the morning. There would be thousands of soldiers in each camp where we played. First of all we played for them then we went to play for the people in town for free so that everybody would love Mobutu again, so they would forget their misery (Interviewed in Brazzaville 25/09/2005).

This interview gives a good idea how intertwined the economic fortunes of Zaire's pre-eminent band were with their position at the centre of political patronage. The fact that Mobutu chose to use Franco as his emissary at the time of the troubles in Katanga in 1976 demonstrates the level of his faith in Franco's powers. He had faith that Franco's magic would pacify the region's disgruntled population and more worryingly for Mobutu its soldiers. Mobutu chose to pour money into Franco's pockets to entertain the troops rather than pay their salaries. Mobutu took Franco with him on state visits. According to Manzenza other African heads of state would frequently ask Mobutu to bring Franco with him. The president of Chad, Francois

Tombalbaye, was always keen because when his people chanted Franco, he would take it to mean him as well.

**Verckys** - I stayed five years with OK Jazz. (1963-69) We went to Benin, Brazzaville, Tanzania, Zambia, Dahomey, Togo, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Mali. We were invited by the governments to all these countries. Senghor in Senegal, Nyerere in Tanzania, Modibo Keita in Mali, Nkrumah in Ghana and to Nigeria. In the Ivory Coast there were people who died in the crowd because it was so big. Franco was well known because Fonior distributed our records there. We usually played in stadiums because it was the government organising the shows. OK Jazz always did big tours. He had a personality that created hysteria in the crowd. In Uganda we arrived at the airport with Mobutu and there was a huge crowd waiting. Mobutu left the airplane and nobody cheered. So Mobutu asked 'What's going on?' He thought the people were there for him. So he waited at the airport to leave and then he heard the people shouting. So he demanded 'What's that?' Behind him the people were shouting for Franco. So they ordered Franco to go back in the airplane. They waited for Mobutu to leave to stop the embarrassment but he couldn't because the crowd was so huge waiting for Franco. (Laughs Hard). We travelled three times with Mobutu that I can remember. We went to Zambia with Mobutu. Often the Heads of State would attend a mass gathering and we would play and then in the evening they wanted to dance and to have entertainment. So the other heads of state

would ask Mobutu ‘Where’s Franco?’ and ask that he brings him.

(Interviewed in Kinshasa 16/09/2005).

It seems Franco’s proximity to Mobutu sometimes benefited him more than it did Mobutu - though it was obviously a relationship of mutual benefit as long as Mobutu remained in power and African people’s love of Franco continued to grow and his fame spread. That fame was enhanced by the constant exposure to the crowds gathered in stadiums for mass political rallies that the band attended at the invitation of the new heads of state. The new presidents wanted some of the Franco magic to rub off on them. Other Congolese stars like African Jazz, Tabu Ley and Afrisa, Les Bantous de la Capitale from Brazzaville, and in the early 1970s the youthful Trio Madjesi were also invited by presidential fans of Congolese music like Kenneth Kaunda and Modibo Keita. Surprising though it may seem the most frequent occasion of mass festivities in foreign countries to which these Congolese stars were invited to perform and to which the youngest generation still are, has been independence day celebrations. Though it might seem more appropriate at the most quintessentially national of festivities to have national bands perform the Pan African appeal of the Congolese bands appears to have superseded any concerns about their being foreign.

According to Franco’s manager, Manzenza, Mobutu himself became the first Honorary President of OK Jazz in 1961, four years before he assumed power. He was an avid fan and often came to OK Jazz concerts in the early 1960s. With the advent of Mobutu’s *authenticité* policy state patronage was made official when OK

Jazz became a state orchestra in 1974 (Ewens 1994: 132). The band even performed in the uniform of the Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution (MPR) when Mobutu toured the country doing rallies at which his new policy was espoused. The band released an album in those outfits (see above). This patronage meant musicians had the capital that was often lacking elsewhere on the continent, to invest in the self-promotion, recording costs and new musical equipment and amplifiers that impressed the fans they attracted all over Africa. It also meant Mobutu was prepared to allow them out of the country to perform as Zaire's cultural ambassadors. Passports would only be granted to those musicians who were prepared to avoid criticism of the state, even in the coded metaphorical language at which the Congolese are so adept. If they wanted gifts and money then avoiding criticism would not suffice. Praises had to be sung. Both Franco and Tabu Ley fell foul of the censors when they dared compose songs that could be read as coded attacks on Mobutu's abuse of human rights and murder of political opponents. Franco's Kikongo song *Luvumbu Ndoki* (Luvumbu the sorcerer) was interpreted as a coded attack on Mobutu. 'Luvumbu was a mythical chief who sacrificed members of his clan for his own benefit, but the name was used to represent any treacherous person and everyone who understood the lyric would know who the accusation was aimed at' (Ewens 1994: 103). It was written after the public hanging on the Pont Kasavubu of dissidents in 1965 and was banned, police agents even seeking out the single in Europe. Franco and OK Jazz fled to Brazzaville for six months until the heat died down. Tabu Ley's song *Kashama Nkoy* lamented the murder of a young friend of that name, who was a political dissident.<sup>168</sup> It had a line in the chorus that seemed to

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<sup>168</sup> For a translation of the song see Mpisi 2003: 398

make a sympathetic but oblique reference to the rebel Pierre Mulele. This led to its banning and the labelling of Tabu Ley as a conspirator in 1968 (Mpisi 2003: 394-400). Tabu Ley apologized personally to Mobutu and like Franco proceeded to compose songs in praise of Mobutu and the MPR. Ley's *Révolution Comparaison* and Franco's *Vottez Verre* and *Lettre au D.G* were just three in a long line of songs dedicated to the powers that be. The most famous of these is probably Franco's song *Candidat Na Biso Mobutu* (Our candidate Mobutu), written in 1984. Franco warns journalists that they should break their pens before talking to any opponents to Mobutu.<sup>169</sup> However even this song could also be taken as a form of backhanded criticism, given that there was only one 'candidate'. These songs meant that both Franco and Tabu Ley continued to receive state patronage however strongly they might have felt privately about Mobutu. This is how Ley saw the situation speaking in May 2000.

It was to save my skin that I was obliged to sing the praises of power, to sing for the president and his party. I did it out of neither affection nor conviction. So the eulogies were performed without great feeling. The authorities were well aware that I wasn't sincere in my praises. They distrusted me. But my popularity was such that they couldn't just pass over me. (My translation. Quoted in Mpisi 2003: 402)

Kanda Bongo Man grew up later in the 1970s and he is very straightforward about why musicians toed the party line in Zaire under Mobutu.

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<sup>169</sup> A portion of this song can be heard on the Public Radio International Broadcast by Suzanne Marmion on the role of popular song in elections past and present. (<http://www.theworld.org/?q=node/3384>)

- *Were there any bands that did more political songs, like Fela Kuti?*

**Kanda** - Not really. We don't have any artist who used to be very hard to the government because you know you would be killed. Mobutu would just kill you.

- *All of them – Kabasele, Franco, Rochereau –did they follow Mobutu?*

**Kanda** - Everyone. You have to if you want to eat. (Interviewed in Manchester 18/11/04)

Another important and overlooked aspect to the spread of Congolese music is the continuation of a substantial financial commitment to investment in broadcasting infrastructure. Huge amounts of money went into building state of the art radio and television studios in Kinshasa in the early 1970s. Mobutu also funded the building of the biggest transmitter in Sub Saharan Africa with a 1,000 KW capacity by the German company Siemens.<sup>170</sup> This transmitter came to be known as the *Grand Tam Tam D'Afrique*. In this way Mobutu continued the legacy of sustained state sponsorship of the national broadcasting media bequeathed by the Belgians and the French in Brazzaville. For Mobutu this was the means by which to build his personality cult across such a vast territory with so many different peoples, in which much of the countryside was very difficult to access physically. National television

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<sup>170</sup> Interview with Head of Programmes at Radio Tele National Congolais Isidore Kabongo Kalala 27/09/2005 Kinshasa



transmission began in 1967. To make the explicit connection between the nation and a glorified vision of himself, everyday on television at the beginning and end of transmission a picture of Mobutu appeared through the clouds wearing his trademark leopard skin hat to the sound of the national anthem. This flow of investment dried up when the earnings from copper collapsed. However the broadcast capacity had been built by 1975 and the Zairian, more than Congo Brazzaville, musicians benefited from transmission to the continent. This huge investment in the media meant airtime had to be filled and so programmers turned to the first love of the Congolese people – their music.

### **The Recourse to Authenticity.**

‘All the meaning of our quest, all the meaning of our effort, all the meaning of our pilgrimage on this African earth, is in search of our authenticity and we will find it because we want, with every fibre of our beings, to rediscover it’. President Mobutu.

(Quoted in Ndaywel è Nziem 1998:676. My translation.)

‘The recourse to authenticity does not mean that we should adopt all the practices of our ancestors. We renew our culture while rejecting that which is contradictory to the modern world’. President Mobutu.

(Presidential interview 28/05/1972. Adelman 1975:137)

The version of *authenticité* that Mobutu was to outline in the early 1970s had a philosophical basis that was to appeal to his people, and provided an inspiration for musicians, in a way little else he proclaimed ever did. Its practical application was another matter. Mobutu took the idea of *authenticité* from Sékou Touré and wrapped it up in the style of Mao Tse Tung and Kim Il Sung. In Zaire the policy involved people having to drop their Christian names and adopt African ones and wearing African clothes. The Catholic Church’s dominance in education was also attacked. Men were told to wear a new outfit the *abacost*.<sup>171</sup> Place names were Africanised.<sup>172</sup> Large scale drumming and dance troupes, called *animation*, were introduced at state

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<sup>171</sup> *Abacoste* meant ‘down with the suit’ as in ‘*à bas la costume*’.

<sup>172</sup> Chad, Benin, Burundi, and Togo all followed suit.

functions backed up by national competitions (Adelman 1975:137).<sup>173</sup> Counsel describes how this policy was implemented in Guinea by Touré's new government in 1958.

One of its first acts was to forcibly disband many of the nation's dance bands and orchestras who were considered "slavish imitators" of "imported dance styles". ... In order to replace these groups and to implement the new cultural policies, the PDG set about creating a huge network of new orchestras...Every administrative region would soon have its own orchestra, dance troupe and choir, with the government financing the purchase of new instruments for the orchestras at substantial cost. The musicians and performers were paid a wage and registered as civil servants. (Counsel 2005)<sup>174</sup>

A very similar cultural policy aimed at fostering a nationalism that transcended ethnicity was adopted in Mali by Modibo Keita. Nyerere focused his public declarations concerning the cultural policy on the 'traditional' acoustic rural music but in practice pursued a similar policy. Leo Sarkisian, a young American working in the music industry happened to be visiting Guinea at the time of independence and ended up becoming Sékou Touré's helper, flying around Guinea finding musicians for state bands. Sarkisian remembers Touré telling him 'I want people in this

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<sup>173</sup> See Askew 2002:196 on the role of such a national competition has played in the performance of nationhood in Tanzania.

<sup>174</sup> Sleeve notes by Graeme Counsel to – Bembeya Jazz National – The Syliphone Years – A double CD of rare recordings and greatest hits from the 60s and 70s.

country to change so that they are no longer a Fula, or a Mandinka, or Malinke they are all Guinean and we'll do this with the music'.<sup>175</sup>

Another feature of this policy was the institution of national competitions between the regional bands in both Guinea and a *biennale* every two years in Mali. Many other newly independent African leaders adopted the national competition as an effective tool for promoting national cultural identity, including Mobutu in Zaire and Nyerere in Tanzania. Mobutu, true to form, preferred not to make a permanent commitment to dispense money to his musical *citoyens* using the regional and national orchestras of Guinea and Mali or the occupational ones of Tanzania. Mobutu stuck to his favourite method – the ad hoc hand out to those musicians he favoured and from whom he expected the favour to be returned in song. *Authenticité* was more than an idea. It had its practical consequences for the strengthening of Congolese music. It meant that Congolese music came to dominate the content of Congolese radio and television, the outcome of a policy very similar to Nyerere's Swahili language policy on Tanzanian radio in the 1970s, when Nyerere was attempting to create linguistic and cultural glue for the new Tanzanian nation. It appears somewhat ironic that this was the period when the mammoth musical extravaganza that brought many of the top black American and Latin American acts to perform in Kinshasa, as an adjunct to the 1974 world heavy weight boxing championship in Kinshasa, took place. This event had a big impact on the musically inclined youth of the capital. Nonetheless this was a policy that, with the help of the national media, successfully fostered a Congolese sense of nationhood partly because

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<sup>175</sup> Quoted by George Collinet in a radio broadcast on Afropop public radio 2004.

it appears it was a version of nationhood that could be reconciled with ethnic identities. The concept of multi-polar identities and following McGaffey (1987) of a 'parallel society' is what Biaya (2001) uses to analyse the new salience of both forms of identity.

Furthermore the integrationist policy of the state and its "authenticity" ... which turned into exhibitionism, nonetheless succeeded in giving the Congolese a national identity, which did not exclude the ethnic, urban or rural one... popular representation concurs that the Ngbandi, member of the Mobutu tribe, is immoral and perverse; the fearful, obsequious and deceitful Kongo is a good musician and a good dancer, and that the marriage of an intelligent Luba to a woman from the Equator (who steals), will produce a child with a Kongo identity etc. The multipolar aspect of identity includes nationalism. (Biaya. 2001 54-55)

### **Zairianisation.**

The second policy that had a big impact on music in Zaire and its export to the rest of the continent was what Mobutu dubbed Zairianisation. Again this was not an original idea. Nigerianization preceded it (Young and Turner 1985: 327). Amin pursued a similar policy in Uganda with the expropriation of Ugandan Asian property after the Asian expulsion order of 1972 and the nationalization of British held interests in 1973 (Ofcansky 1999: 44). Zairianization was a haphazard ‘nationalization’ of sort. Mining, transport associations, agriculture, electricity, oil, communications and of course banks and insurance institutions were removed from foreign ownership and placed in the hands of people from Mobutu’s circle, called the ‘cadres’.<sup>176</sup> Amongst these mining and the banking institutions were the most critical. Those to whom Mobutu distributed this huge swathe of patronage were, more often than not, without previous experience of management of the business they were given. The *acquéreurs*, as they came to be known, often saw the business they had been given as personal gifts rather than an onerous responsibilities to be managed judiciously for the common good. The people in this circle lived in a febrile atmosphere of competition. What Zairianisation meant for musicians was a fresh wave of patronage. Mobutu’s gift to Franco of Fonior’s MAZADIS factory made him an *acquéreur*. The disastrous economic consequences of the policy meant Mobutu invited foreign investors to take back their ownership of the nationalized businesses a year later including MAZADIS. Most declined the offer (Young and Turner 1985: 357).

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<sup>176</sup> On Zairianisation see Young and Turner 1985: 326-362 Nzongola 2002: 148-151 Ndaywel è Nziem 1998

## **Chapter Three: The Seduced**

### **3:1 Urban Music for an Urban People**

#### **African Urbanisation in the Twentieth Century**

An important factor in the growth of Congolese music at home and its spread in Africa has been the explosion of the population in its capital and of all the capitals in Africa to which the music has spread.<sup>177</sup> This population explosion provided an ever-growing source and market for the music. Urbanisation without industrialisation has characterised African history since independence. In 1950 15% of Africa's population was urban. By 1970 it was 23% and in 2004 it was 40%. In this same period Congo Kinshasa's urban population has risen from 19% to 33%, Nigeria's from 11% to 48%, Kenya's from 6% to 46% and Tanzania's from 4% to 37%. Africa's population has also increased dramatically, from 224 million in 1950 to 906 million in 2005 meaning that the urban population rose from 33 million in 1950 to 362 million in 2005.<sup>178</sup> It has been capital cities that have seen the biggest growth. Kinshasa's population has risen from just 170,000 in 1950, to 450,000 in 1960 to 1.4 million in 1970 and 5.7 million in 2004. Lagos has seen similar growth from 290,000 in 1950 to 11.1 million in 2004. In East Africa Nairobi has grown from just 90,000 to 2.8 million and Dar es Salaam from 80,000 to 2.7 million

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<sup>177</sup> All Figures taken from UN sources at <http://esa.un.org/unup/index> and Encyclopaedia Britannica. Such figures have to be estimates given the statistical gathering capacities of African states during this period. Even as estimates the basic point about rapid population growth holds.

<sup>178</sup> <http://esa.un.org/unpp/p2k0data.asp>

between 1950 and 2004. The figures for Congo-Kinshasa comparing the population growth of its two major urban centres are similar to other African countries.<sup>179</sup>

| <b>Congo</b> | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2004 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Urban (%)    | 19   | 22   | 30   | 29   | 28   | 30   | 33   |
| Pop mil.     | 10   | 12   | 14   | 20   | 27   | 34   | 37   |
| Kinshasa     | .17  | .45  | 1.4  | 2.2  | 3.4  | 4.7  | 5.7  |
| Lubumbashi   | .12  | .2   | .33  | .47  | .66  | .91  | 1.1  |

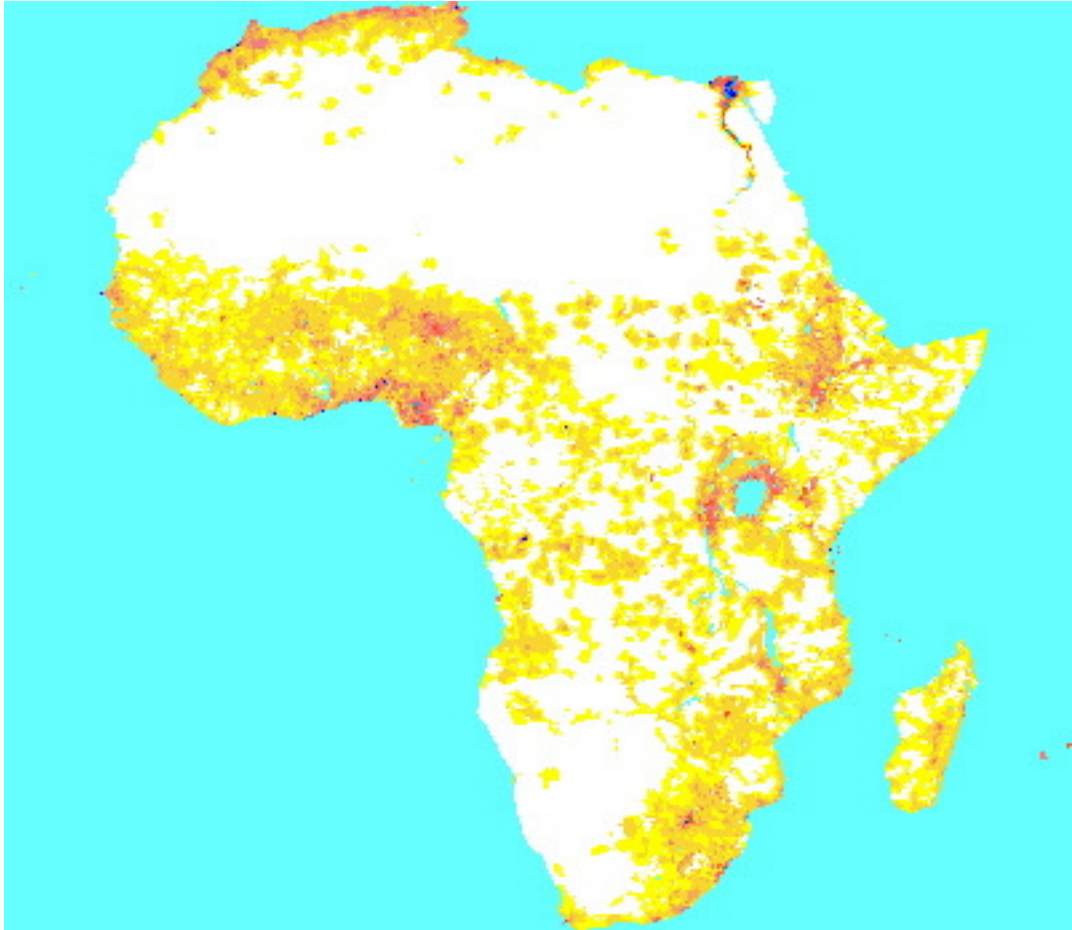
This demographic concentration in Kinshasa is part of the explanation for the preponderance of the capital in the musical life of the nation as well as providing a concentration of potential consumers for the development of the music business. This concentration of population growth in the urban centres and most significantly in the capital cities has provided a steady increase in the size of the market for urban music in Africa. The focus of population growth in capital cities has meant access to large audiences when travelling the continent has become easier than when the proportion of the population that was rural was higher and total numbers were smaller. The following map of population density in Africa in 1970 and 1990 helps explain why it has been particular parts of West, East and Southern Africa that have provided the most lucrative and attractive destinations for Congolese musicians alongside factors like GDP and GDP/capita. Countries with well exploited and plentiful resources, especially oil (Gabon) and diamonds (Botswana) have been helpful in making these

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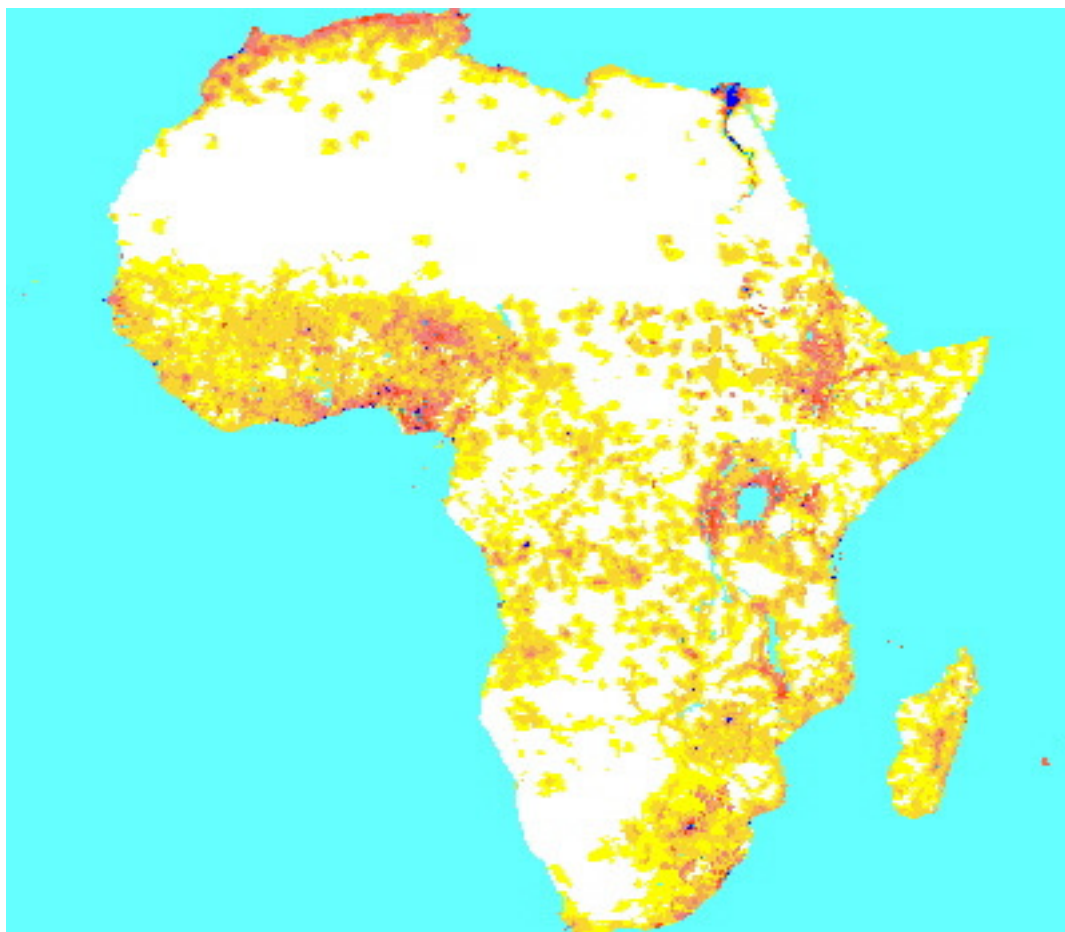
<sup>179</sup> See appendix 3 for these figures in Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa.



countries attractive destinations for the Congolese even though their populations are relatively small. Put the wealth (even if poorly distributed) and population together (Nigeria) and you have the biggest potential market along the West African coast.



African population density and distribution in 1970



African population density and distribution in 1990.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> [na.unep.net/datasets/datalist.php](http://na.unep.net/datasets/datalist.php)

### **3:2 Belgian, French and British colonial cultural policy**

At an ideological level the history of the British, French, Belgian and Portuguese colonies all evolved in the face of one fundamental contradiction. European colonial rule was imposed without the consent of Africans. Hence there was a common two-tiered structure of European control and administration with a subordinate African authority with varying degrees of limited autonomy. The central justification used in the twentieth century for continued colonial rule was teleological. European society was posited as advanced and African as backward. European society was the basis for judging what it meant to be advanced and African societies, like other colonised regions, was what it meant to be backward. These words have since been replaced with the words 'developed' and 'developing'.<sup>181</sup> The racist idea that Africans and Europeans are fundamentally different sat awkwardly with the teleological justification for colonial rule that we all have the same developmental destiny towards which the colonists were leading the colonised. However the notion that Africans are different was still invoked, especially by the British, but also by the French at times, to justify the undemocratic system of indirect rule. The colonised used these two competing discourses in the battle for independence against the coloniser (Bhabha 1994, Chatterjee 1993). The colonised could use the European ideas of a common universal human destiny and its brother universal human rights to claim equality and hence the right to independent self-government. The second discourse, of essential cultural difference, could be used to claim the right, even the

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<sup>181</sup> The word 'Underdeveloped' has been used to suggest that the colonised nations have had their backward state of development forced upon them. However the term leaves the notion of a universal basis for judging what constitutes human development intact.

duty, to chart a course different to that of Europeans, whether that course was imposed under colonial rule or one imposed by other means after independence.

Nugent sees these similarities as fundamental to colonial rule but picks out some interesting differences to account for the contrast in the strength of the pre-independence nationalist movements in French and British West Africa (Nugent 2004: 19-57). He needs those differences to explain why, in the run up to independence, and in contrast to say Ghana, Kenya and Tanganyika

...it is difficult to point to cohesive nationalist movements in French West Africa or French Equatorial Africa, which subverted the agenda of colonial power. It is striking that as late as 1957, the year of Ghanaian independence, Léopold Senghor was still invoking the imagery of basically contented Africans who merely wanted to 'build their own huts' within the French compound. (Nugent 2004: 41-2)

Those differences are the ones that may help account for the pre-independence urban musical developments, the Highlife that developed in Ghana and Nigeria, urban hybrids that did not develop in Dakar or Abidjan. This pre-war development did not mean Congolese music had no impact in Ghana and Nigeria but it was in competition with indigenous forms that remained the dominant idioms. By contrast the absence of such a strong national form in Francophone Africa helped make Congolese rumba particularly attractive in Senegal, Ivory Coast, Benin, Gabon and Cameroon. In the case of Senegal, Guinea and Mali they soon came into being after independence but

remained only for domestic consumption. In the case of Guinea and Mali in the 1960s state sponsorship established national predominance for national forms.

British indirect rule excluded Africans from political engagement in the metropole, and the post war funding of higher education fed into the development of a vibrant urban culture in Lagos and Accra. It also contributed, in the case of Ghana and Nkrumah, to a developed political discourse of independent African nationalism and Pan-Africanism.<sup>182</sup> By contrast the French kept an avenue for an emergent African political elite open to the metropole and coincidentally there was no equivalent in French West Africa of Highlife. Nationalist leaders in the French colonies like Léopold Senghor, the future president of Senegal, and Félix Houphouët-Boigny, the future president of the Ivory Coast, both became Deputies in the French National Assembly in the 1950s.<sup>183</sup> The training of these African deputies was in French universities. The elite minority were accorded the status of citizen in the French colonies, a category that didn't exist in British or Belgian colonies. The Portuguese categories of *assimilados*, and the Belgian category *évolué* had no direct equivalent in British colonies. The elite *citoyen* dominated national politics at independence in French colonial Africa. Like other elites they had an important influence in turn on the evolution of urban culture. In 1938 there were 90 000 Africans categorised as citizens in French West Africa but only 5000 in French Equatorial Africa (Brunschwig 1982: 220). Congo Brazzaville was the furthest away and, judging by the small number of Africans who became citizens in French Equatorial Africa, was

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<sup>182</sup> See Nugent 2004: 27 on the significance of the riots and agitation as early as 1948 in the Gold Coast.

<sup>183</sup> The decision to permit the election of a representative deputy from four communes in Senegal to go to the French National Assembly was taken in 1872. Nugent 2004: 14

also on the margins of the French acculturation project, such as it was. The French didn't impose the kind of petty segregation favoured by the Belgians, pass laws, curfews and most irksome and humiliating to musicians, a prohibition on drinking wine. This meant Brazzaville could be more fun than Leopoldville in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>184</sup> Musicians coming to Brazzaville from Leopoldville also found they could perform to white audiences (Martin 1994: 194). Paul Kamba's Victoria Brazza named after the hoped for Allied Victory in 1942, Antillean Jean Réal's Congo Rumba, Massamba 'Lebel' and his Jazz Bohème, all hailed from Brazzaville, before Wendo formed Victoria Kin in Leopoldville after the war.<sup>185</sup> In Brazzaville the development of rumba was not impeded by the dominance of French cosmopolitan culture in the way such developments were further north. That dominance, I am suggesting, took the form of a more French metropolitan orientation on the part of African elites in French West Africa, when compared with the level of British or Belgian orientation of the African elites in British and Belgian colonies.

The Belgian colonial policy differed from the French. Very few Africans were educated to secondary level. There was a tiny elite of Congolese formally deemed *évolués* by the time of independence and this status was not on a par with that which French and British colonial subjects could achieve.<sup>186</sup> The Belgian policy was closer

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<sup>184</sup> Interviews in Brazzaville and Kinshasa. Also see Martin 1994: 138

<sup>185</sup> Interview with Fylla Saint-Eudes, Mfumu in Brazzaville 20/09/2005

<sup>186</sup> One test led to what was called a Mérites Civiques, the second and more stringent test led to the more valuable status of Immatriculés, which applied to the whole family. In 1954 there were 769 individuals that had the Mérites Civiques and 70 Immatriculés. Acquiring this status meant access was allowed to clinics, cinemas, white areas of town, a separate *évolués* space on boats, to sit on pews in Church behind whites instead of on the floor, permission to buy alcohol and access for their children to attend white schools. There were 21 African children in white schools in 1953 and 909 in 1957 (Ndaywel è Nziem 1998: 462). Estimating the number of *évolués* at any given time depends on criterion used. Hence for 1956 we have an official state figure of 244, academic estimates of around 12,000 and Lumumba putting the figure at 100,000. Ibid 452 -3.

to that behind the apartheid policy in South Africa, with its physical segregation of Europeans and Africans and the brutal policing of pass laws. The Belgians segregated by race in Leopoldville. They also created a separate *mulâtres* category like the South African ‘coloured’ category. The British are implicated in the ethnicisation of African subjects but had a more *laissez-faire* attitude to the mixing of African, diasporic and European cultures in the urban music of colonial cities. This is clear for instance in the case of Ghana as the population of Accra grew in the 1930s (Collins 1994). Africans were not precluded from performing for Europeans in the clubs of Accra in the way they were without special dispensation in Leopoldville. Highlife appeared much earlier in the 1930s than Congolese rumba in Brazzaville and Leopoldville in the 1950s.

There is also a contrast between British West and East Africa. The major port and market towns of Accra and Lagos and the relatively relaxed attitude of the British here towards mixing and cultural exchange provided a basis for the development of a vibrant nightlife in the inter war years in a way that didn’t occur in Nairobi, Mombasa or Dar es Salaam.<sup>187</sup> By 1950 Lagos had a population of 290,000 against Nairobi’s 90,000.<sup>188</sup> An urban hybrid like Highlife never came into being in Nairobi in the interwar years. Nairobi was relatively isolated from the flow of Allied troops bringing jazz to the West and East coasts of Africa in the war years. It had none of the pre-colonial history as a slaving centre, or the vibrant urban life of the West African market that distinguished Accra. Nairobi remained a city dominated by settlers in these years, for whom it acted as the supply centre of their settler

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<sup>187</sup> See the comparison of population figures in the previous section.

<sup>188</sup> <http://esa.un.org/unpp/p2k0data.asp> See appendix 3 for more figures.

agricultural economy (Ogot and Ochieng 1995) and they appear to have imposed a more racially segregated character upon the small town than developed in Accra. The absence of a strong local national musical competitor in Kenya, as in much of French West Africa, left the market for African urban dance music more open to the Congolese in the 1960s than in Ghana. The same factor can be seen at work in Zambia, and Uganda. Tanzania is an interesting case because there were parallel musical developments to those in Congo in the late 1940s based on the cultural openness of Swahili culture, to which we will come, but here the local forms never made any headway outside the home country and never benefited from the growth of an indigenous record producing industry.<sup>189</sup>

Kenis (1995 and 2006) suggests the comparatively late date of Congolese colonisation, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, compared to its potential competitors in Ghana and Nigeria, meant that a European aesthetic did not have so long to implant itself before decolonisation in 1960. He suggests that this meant they were better able to make a more African hybrid when re-appropriating the Latin influence than other African colonies and that this is the reason ‘music from Kinshasa, and not Douala or Accra, achieved pan-African recognition’ (Kenis 2006). Kenis may have a point in claiming it was the Congolese that made the best use of the music returning to Africa from Latin America, in part because they were still so close to the rural African sources from which it drew so much inspiration. Kenis (2006) also claims that ‘West Africans had developed their own breed of Latin-influenced music well before the war’ but without the ‘African-ness’ of what came out of Kinshasa. Kenis

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<sup>189</sup> Listen to track 3 (CD 1) for an example of Tanzanian urban dance music from 1950 recorded by Hugh Tracey with his mobile recording equipment.



does not say where or by whom this Latin-influenced music was produced in West Africa. In Ghana for instance Highlife shows no strong Latin influence according to Collins (1994) and Kubik (1999). It appears the Congolese were in fact the first to do this re-appropriation in commercially available music. Kenis also claims the British and French ‘imposed close control over all aspects of culture, including popular music’ (Kenis 2006) without recognising the differences mentioned between the 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in African popular music in French and British West Africa or that *Rumba Congolaise* was as much a Brazzavilleois phenomena under the French in the post war era as it was Leopoldvilleois. It should be kept in mind that the Belgian nation was culturally divided between Flemish and French speakers and this hardly helped in the formulation of an acculturation project that might have cut the Congolese off from their folk roots.

The Belgians had no uniform and strong culture to export abroad. Most missionaries and hence most Belgians in the Congo were Flemish who much preferred speaking Tshiluba and Lingala to French. They were usually sensitive to cultural exploitation, believing that they themselves had been discriminated against in Belgium. (Adelman, K.L. 1975: 139)

If anything what the Belgians brought with them were the musical fashions popular in Europe generally in the post war era. This meant on the one hand the Latin influenced light opera or crooning of Tino Rossi on record. On the other the instrumental skills of white jazz musicians – especially the electric guitar technique Bill Alexandre brought with him. There were other less well-known Belgian

musicians who also played a role -Fud Candrix, John Ouwerkx, Glibert Warnant and Jacques Pelzer. The Belgians actually appear to have encouraged music in the *cit  indig ne* ‘to promote the myth of “Kinshasa the fun city” and attract cheap labour towards the industrial centres’ (Kenis 2006). Mangwana remembers how the Belgians supported live performances of urban popular music in the capital.

**Mangwana** The Belgians organised many cultural gatherings. There was a festival that was called *Spectacle Populaire* (popular spectacle). They called jazz musicians, Jamaicans, people from all over the continent for that programme. Even in the provinces they would organise these events. They would organise them in the dry season every year outdoors. Excellent. (Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04).

## **Chapter Four. The Business**

### **4:1 Agents, Managers and Promoters**

‘The music of Congo-Zaire has had the most widespread and lasting impact on commercial music in sub-Saharan Africa, and Kinshasa-Brazzaville...have been the undisputed musical trendsetters’. (Stone 2000: 121)

In the 1960s Congolese bands reaped the rewards of the popularity of their music with the governments of the newly independent African states. The resources those governments had at their disposal to promote and pay any Congolese bands booked to play for national events meant there were no worries about money. In the 1970s when the first flush of independence had worn off and commodity prices affected many governments badly private promoters became important. The role of agents, managers and promoters is often overlooked in the development of popular music in Africa. Few of them appear in the limelight focused on the musicians. Many of the musicians interviewed for this study saw the quality of promoters as the principal factor determining their success or failure when touring. They took the quality of their shows for granted and felt that with good promotion they would always succeed. J.B. Mpiana the singer and leader of one of the two principal bands of the fourth generation that sprang out of the group Wenge Musica made the following comments on the role of promoters in the continuing popularity of Congolese music on the continent.

*-Why is Congolese music so well loved in Africa?*

**Mpiana** - It depends on marketing. For instance we are very well liked in Abidjan. But we went there recently and we weren't happy with the turn out. It depends on the producer and the promotion they organise. The success that we have in each place we perform depends on the resources the promoter spends out on us. For instance in Cameroon and Chad we are loved, everywhere in Zambia, Zimbabwe. We've played in the biggest stadiums in all these countries. We are francophone and they are Anglophone but it doesn't matter because there was very good promotion there and because people know us from the video clips on the TV, the stadium was completely full last year 2003, in Harare.

(Interviewed in Downtown Studios Johannesburg 25/03/04).

This interview echoed views expressed by Mpiana's rival Werra Son. Promoters are not the only factor of course. Mpiana sites the importance of video clips and television. Franco and Tabu Ley built up long-term relationships with managers who also acted as promoters, Franco with Manzenzea and Tabu Ley with Sedija. The manager Mobhe Jhomos helped in the birth of the third generation when he took on the management first of Thu Zaïna and then of Le Trio Madjesi. In Manzenza's apprenticeship with Sam Mangwana and the band Festival des Maquisard he developed the backing of the sponsors in the beer companies that have remained an economic mainstay of Congolese bands. The development of his skills in organising

tours was important to the international success of OK Jazz. Here is the story of how he developed the art of organising tours.

**Manzenza** - I organised some tours for Les Maquisards inside Zaire to Kisangani and N'Bandaka. We took the river carrying all the instruments and amplifiers. Before the band arrived in Kisangani I travelled ahead and organised the bars where we had the contracts, the transport, publicity and accommodation. I found sponsors in the places to which we were travelling. The sponsors at that time were the breweries, Primus and Polar, which became SKOL. Primus didn't give money but they provided the publicity, the accommodation, and the tickets to travel food and the beer of course. So I did the deal with a white manager with Primus in Kinshasa to sponsor the band and then they phoned ahead to tell people to make the arrangements. At that time Franco didn't use sponsors. He didn't need to because he had political sponsors.

*- When you arrived in Kisangani with the Festival how was it organised?*

**Manzenza** - We based ourselves in a big bar called the Olympia and we stayed there six weeks. It could take four or five hundred people. We played Wednesday and the whole weekend starting Friday. The tour took three months, with three weeks in N'Bandaka. We played on the boat each Saturday, using the boat's engine for electricity. I negotiated the conditions. We got the door money and he got the extra beer sales. He fed and lodged

us. Tours like that were well established by this time. They started with Bowane in 1955 with his band Watam using the river then OK Jazz carried on. I heard that fans in Kisangani were demanding the Maquisards so I travelled there to check it out even though it took two weeks to get there. When I arrived I contacted Sam to tell him to come. I had to give a message to OTRACO (Office de Transport Congolais) who had a radiotelephone. There were telephone lines but they didn't work. So this was the way. (Interviewed in Brazzaville 25/09/2005)

After this first experience of the now established use of the river, beer companies and bar cum hotel owners Manzenza moved on to a more adventurous method with his next band – Le Trio Madjesi – a band that was seriously challenging the supremacy of Franco, Tabu Ley and Verckys in the early 1970s.

**Manzenza** - In 1973 Trio Madjesi asked me to join them. In 1973 we did a tour of the whole of Zaire, to every region of the country, to every major town. It took 45 days starting in May. We flew everywhere. I found enough money to pay for the whole band to fly to N'Bandaka without sponsors. I spoke to people and persuaded them to lend me that money. We took everything on the airplane because there was nothing in the interior. I had fourteen musicians and three dancers. We had a mixing desk and a technician with us. We went to N'Bandaka, Bukavu, Goma, Mbuji Mayi, Kananga, Kikwit, Bandundu, Matadi and Lubumbashi, Kolwezi and Lukasi. There was more money there in Katanga. It was the economic capital. We

always did three concerts on that tour. The first concert in a closed venue for the VIP's. The second one in a bar for the middling people and a third one for the young ones in a stadium. We always played in the stadiums. We did that everywhere.

*- How did you manage to organise all that?*

**Manzenza** - Before the orchestra arrived I would always travel ahead. We started to benefit from Air Zaire. They gave us tickets on credit and then gave us a 50% reduction on the ticket price. That saved a lot of money. I did that tour with no debts. It was well organised. For instance there were hotels that were supported by the state that we used in each region so we didn't pay. Food was organised through friends and fans everywhere. Fans wanted to feed the band so they could tell stories of the band. So that was food, transport and accommodation. In each region the governor would lodge us there and explain that it was necessary to entertain the people to Mobutu. That was an explanation Mobutu accepted easily. The governors were pleased to have such a popular band because it reflected well on them. Usually when I toured with Franco in the interior it was under the auspices of the MPR so there was no problem with costs. They paid for everything and gave us a fee. (Interviewed in Brazzaville 25/09/2005)

Manzenza used a mix of support from fans as well as private and state sponsors to reduce costs as much as possible and increase the profit margin. The beer companies

have survived all the vicissitudes of Congolese economic history. They continue to be the primary sponsors of musicians in the fourth generation. The beer companies and the transport company – Air Zaire – saw the benefit of associating themselves with the pop stars. The history of Congolese music is littered with songs devoted to sponsors as well as straightforward adverts.<sup>190</sup> The performances for commercial sponsors fade into those for individual politicians and business people. There is now a price singers put on naming someone in a song, a price that varies according to the status of the singer (The Economist 2003, White 1999:164). *Ko bwaka libanda*, ‘to throw stones’, is the Lingala for this practice, shortened now to *libanda*. One of OK Jazz’s best known songs, *Azda*, is an ode to a Congolese distributor for VW cars.<sup>191</sup> According to Suzanne Marmion (2006) this is also a song that became a Mobutu campaign favourite after he promised that everybody in Zaire would one day own a VW car. In the new millennium it is mobile phone companies that have been added to the small group of highly profitable enterprises operating in the DRC, who also choose to associate themselves with the most popular bands of the Wenge generation. Beer companies remain the most important sponsors though. Primus have managed to lure Werra Son away from their main rivals Skol for an undisclosed sum in 2005. Manzenza also made clever use of state officials wanting to benefit from the same association. Finally the community of fans providing food saved more money. The performance of three concerts to cater for the entire class spectrum was an innovation that became established Congolese touring practice in the rest of Africa.

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<sup>190</sup> Listen to track 5 (CD 1) for an early example of an advertising song for a sponsor, in this case Bata shoes.

<sup>191</sup> Listen to track 18 (CD 1) for this classic from Franco’s repertoire.



Given the importance of local knowledge and contacts for effective promotion bands could not rely on one nationally based promoter to do all the work. So they have built up relationships with different promoters in many of the countries to which they have travelled. For local promoters the status of Congolese bands, already established over the airwaves and on record, was important. But they also contributed in no small part to furthering those reputations by promoting stadium gigs around the continent. Many African promoters would only be confident in promoting a band once they had them in hand. If promoters continued to offer dates the tour would continue to roll. Daliens remembered 'In Cameroon we played for a gentleman from Baffoussam. And when we had finished the tour for him, he sold on the contract to another promoter, a Senegalese, who took us first to Togo, the Ivory Coast and back round to Benin' (Ewens 1994:169).

It was Sam Mangwana of the second generation who really did the most in establishing a high profile Congolese presence in West Africa in the late 1970s. Again that success was made possible by the relationship between good new music and effective promotion.

**Mangwana** - I met Badmos in Abidjan. Things worked out well because there were members of Tabu Ley's band in Abidjan, including Dizzy and Lokassa and Runya Muya when I arrived. They were there to record with him. I proposed that they join me in my new musical adventure and they accepted. That's the way we came to create the African All Stars. Badmos came to listen to us and he liked what he heard. He was mixed Beninois and

Nigerian, so he had the contacts in Nigeria, and his older brother was a big producer in West Africa. He took us to Nigeria to record, the songs *Georgette* and *Matinda* and others. In Nigeria they had professional studios, far better than anything we had in Kinshasa. There were eight track machines there, whereas in Abidjan we would gather around one mike. That's how our first record had such a fantastic sound. That's how Badmos became our producer. (Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04)

In the 1980s as many Congolese musicians moved to Europe they continued to tour in Africa. In Europe they formed relationships with Africans like themselves who moved to Paris or New York and set up businesses and had the international contacts and connections back in Africa to organise tours. Wuta Mayi of Les Quatre Étoiles was one of those musicians that settled in Paris in the 1980s and managed to keep touring Africa. Indeed in some ways the move to Europe could make it easier to organise tours in Africa than from Kinshasa because of the better communications infrastructure.

- *With Les Quatre Étoiles how did you manage to gain success in Africa?*

**Wuta Mayi** - To begin with there was a big Kenyan promoter of African and Jamaican music who took us to Kenya called Victor Kibunza. He was based in the US because he had a really big nightclub called the Kilimanjaro in Washington. He still had business in Kenya. I played in Nairobi for the first time in 1988. It was in a stadium because it was for the Independence

Day celebrations. We played in other stadiums in Mombasa, and Kisumu.

In Cameroon there was another promoter. In Burkina Faso it was at the invitation of the government in 1990. We played in the capital in a stadium and in a province Bogado in a big hall. (Interviewed in Cheltenham 06/03/04)

The new Paris based musicians could end up being more popular in the rest of Africa than in their home country because organising tours to their benighted homeland was less likely to prove lucrative than trips elsewhere on the continent. This was the case with Kanda Bongo Man. It was Jambo Varenen of Island Records and Peter Gabriel of Womad who gave him his first big break in the 1980s when he toured Europe extensively and got himself a French manager Catherine Poesen. This led to gigs in Africa after 1987 and with sufficient promotion and binding contracts to pay for flights and hotels and some government invitations.<sup>192</sup>

*- Did you organise the tours yourself?*

**Kanda** - The promoters pay for everything, the flights to Mali and then Ivory Coast pays for the flights from Mali. 1988 I went to perform in Dakar in the stadium with Youssou N'Dour for Nelson Mandela's birthday. The president sent his own private jet from Senegal to Paris to pick up me and my other friends. In 1989 I went to Burkina Faso in the stadium there with 150,000 people. It was the government that invited me, Blaise Compaoré

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<sup>192</sup> Manchester: 18/11/04 See annex for full interview.

the president. This was after Thomas Sankara passed away, you know to keep the people quiet.<sup>193</sup> In 1989 I went to Guinea Conakry and performed in the stadium there. 1990 I performed in the stadium in Sierra Leone then in 1990 I went to the USA. Then I was in Gabon in a big hall with Manu Dibango in 1990. The first time I went to Kenya was in 1991 and Tanzania in 1992. Oh yes and Lusaka. That time it was when the government changed, when Chiluba came to power at the time of the elections. Catherine was a good agent. She did the contracts.

(Interviewed in Manchester 29/11/04)

These tours were made profitable for Kanda by contracts in which 50% was paid up front and the flights, accommodation and local promotion to fill stadiums, remained the affair of the local promoters, a deal struck by Poesen. Kaloji Wa Musongo Kayembe has brought together many of the crucial ingredients of a good promoter and has played an important role in the touring of big bands in East and Southern Africa. Since 1980 when he started his first bar in his home town of Lubumbashi he has set up a chain of 17 nightclubs called Chez Ntemba, in Congo in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Mbuji Mayi, in Zambia in Ndola, Kabwe, Kapiriri, Lusaka, Mazabooko and Kafue, in Harare, two in Malawi, in Gaborone, in Windhoek, in Maputo and in Johannesburg where he has now been based for ten years. He has one planned for London. Some clubs have long-term contracts with Congolese bands and all of them use recorded Congolese music. This provides a permanent outlet for any new music. These clubs have given Kayembe a solid business reputation and act

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<sup>193</sup> Thomas Sankara was actually assassinated in October 1987.

as the basis for the work he has done as a promoter. Kayembe, like Manzenza, has based the tour promotion he has done on sponsors with the media, transport and beer companies.

*- I've heard your name in some songs. Why is that?*

**Kayembe** - Oh yes everybody sings for me because it's me who does the promotion of their music. The biggest shows I did in Tanzania were with Awilo. I also took him to Nairobi in 1996. Last year I took him to Malawi. I've taken Koffi, Wenge, Madilu System, Tshala Mwana and Defao to Zambia. In 1987 I did my first concert with Wenge Musica. We did six concerts in Zambia the whole country. We did more concerts in 1990/91. Everybody was excited about the change of government with Chiluba taking power. That was in big halls that could hold ten thousand

*- Who have you taken to Kenya and Tanzania?*

**Kayembe** - Awilo, Defao, Koffi Olomide, Wenge. We played in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu, in Tanzania in Mwanza, Arusha, Moshi, Morogoro and Mbeya. With Koffi we played in Dar as Salaam, Mwanza and Arusha. It worked well with Koffi at that time he was in demand. In Botswana I have a club that can take 2000 people each night, and there it works really well. I have a really big club in Windhoek. In Zimbabwe I have a club with two levels. It works really well in spite of all the political problems. It's the

biggest club in the country. All of them are called *Chez Ntemba*, so if people see a *Chez Ntemba* everybody will go there.

- *When you want to do big shows how do you organise it?*

**Kayembe** The first thing is to find sponsors who will do the publicity for you. Like in Tanzania I used Air Tanzania. They gave me the flights for the musicians. Then I had Kibogo, the beer company, who paid for the accommodation and the food. Then I had Clouds FM who occupied themselves with the publicity. So all I have to take care of is signing the contract with the stars, renting the instruments and booking and paying the venues. If you get all that organised you don't have any problems. If there are no sponsors I won't do a show. It won't work. If there are sponsors I will. Because the beer company wants to sell more beer and get more publicity so they want to have shows in the stadium where there are more people. Everybody sees it. We did stadiums with Wenge, Awilo, Koffi and Defao in Kenya and Tanzania. Before I arrive there is no confidence in the deal but I have my reputation to protect and that is something people can have confidence in. Everybody knows me now in Tanzania. Without me there would be no confidence. If I put myself in front of the risk they know I have these businesses everywhere, they know if I take the money they can find me. It's like that. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 24/03/04).

## **4:2 Le Grand Tam Tam D'Afrique: Radio and Television**

‘Even in Senegal and Morocco they could hear our radio, even in Algeria, in Kenya and Zimbabwe. They could all hear our radio. That’s why in Kenya, in Zambia, in Zimbabwe, in Malawi, in Uganda they made copies of Congolese music. Congolese music was the most powerful in black Africa’. Sam Mangwana<sup>194</sup>

‘One of the great sources of outside music was the Congo. Radio Brazzaville was listened to avidly in Sierra Leone’. Stapleton and May 1987: 52

Congolese musicians were often stars before they arrived in a country and Franco already a legend. Of all the non-musical factors responsible for the spread of Congolese music radio is probably the most important. Television broadcasting started in 1966. This played a role in the development and funding of the music at home for export. With the advent of video clips in the 1980s television also became a significant factor in the diffusion of Congolese music. The primary reason behind the strength of the Congolese presence on the African airwaves in the period when the music saw its most substantial development was the occupation of Belgium and France by the Nazis. For the Belgian and French governments in exile Leopoldville and Brazzaville became important bases still under their control. As such they also became centres for the prosecution of the war of propaganda with their German enemy in Europe as well as in Africa. This broadcast capacity could be used to

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<sup>194</sup> Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04

broadcast propaganda to counteract the potential attraction Germany might have held for Africans as an enemy of their colonial rulers (Bender 2004: 95). Congolese rumba was included as part of programming directed towards Africa to attract African listeners. With the financial help of their British and US allies both countries committed the resources necessary to build and maintain short wave transmitters powerful enough to be heard all over the continent and even as far away as the Caribbean as well as back in France (Stewart 2000: 18). To begin with the transmitter of Radio Congo Belge in Leopoldville relayed the BBC but began broadcasting rumba when a larger transmitter was installed to service a second station Radiodiffusion Nationale Belge. These stations were apparently harder to block for the Germans than broadcasts from London (Stewart 2000: 19). This commitment was sustained after the war when the French built an even bigger transmitter outside Brazzaville.<sup>195</sup> Congolese rumba was heard over the airwaves with an unrivalled strength and clarity. ‘The powerful Radio Congo Belge broadcast intensively its local music, not suspecting it would be perceived all around Africa – just like rock’n’roll was perceived in Europe and the USA at the same moment – as something completely new, radical, exciting and subversive’ (Kenis 2006). By contrast the British and Portuguese never found themselves in a situation where they were unable to broadcast from home and so never developed a comparable transmission capacity in one of their African colonies. The British based their African broadcast operations in London with the World Service. Gerald Arnaud, in an article on the under-representation of the French Congo in the history of the

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<sup>195</sup> Interviews Brazzaville.



rumba, describes De Gaulle's role in making the decision to fund a substantial radio transmission capacity in Brazzaville.

Brazzaville played an eminent role: as virtual capital of 'Free France'. De Gaulle, aware that he owed everything to the radio, hastened to give considerable means for the transmitter in Brazzaville, which became the most powerful on the continent...Until the 1980s, all of Africa followed the development of Congolese Rumba in real time and thanks to this fact it became the first truly 'Pan African' music. (Arnaud, 2002 my translation)

The development of radio in the Belgian Congo did occur before World War II but it wasn't until the boost to transmission capacity during the war that it played a direct role in the continental diffusion of the music.<sup>196</sup> When Radio Congo Belge was established in Leopoldville as an anti German propaganda vehicle continental coverage was established. Radio Brazzaville recorded local music and all these stations could be heard in both cities, adding to the cross fertilisation of the two scenes.<sup>197</sup> Congo Brazzaville, being under French rule, linked into French West Africa and the stations in Douala, Abidjan and Dakar. Both transmitters broadcast local music back to the Caribbean by which it had been influenced at inception, completing the circle initiated by the slave trade a second time.

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<sup>196</sup> Stewart 2000: 18-19 for more on this early period.

## **The Development of Radio in Africa.**

The development of such a substantial transmission capacity in the Congos for the continent-wide broadcast of Congolese music would not have been so important had it not been for the fortuitous and coincidental political commitment on the part of the principal colonisers to the development of radio as the primary means for communicating with their largely non literate subjects.<sup>198</sup> The centralisation, state control and promotion of radio were policies that appealed to the leaders of the independence struggle who inherited the colonial mantle in the 1960s. Radios, like record players, were attractive partly as a status symbol (Martin 1996: 135).

According to informants, the new content developed by the independent nations included a substantial portion of Congolese music, especially in the surrounding countries. The Voice of America, the BBC World Service and Radio France Internationale all had African broadcasters who were very aware of the popularity of Congolese music and like many nationally based broadcasters also included a substantial proportion of Congolese music in their play lists.<sup>199</sup> Many informants remembered hearing Congolese music on these stations as much as on their national broadcasters especially the powerful Afrique No. 1 when it started broadcasting from Gabon in 1979. George Collinet, who grew up listening to Congolese music in Cameroon, started work at the Voice of America in the 1960s and has been a keen

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<sup>198</sup> Studies of African broadcast media are still few and far between.

Fardon, Richard and Furniss, Graham (eds) *African broadcast cultures: radio in transition* Oxford: James Currey, 2000. Lewis, Peter M. and Booth, Jerry 1989. *Invisible medium: public, commercial and community radio* Tudesq, André Jean. 2002. *L'Afrique parle, l'Afrique écoute: les radios en Afrique subsaharienne* Paris: Karthala. Wedell, George (ed) 1986 *Making broadcasting useful: the development of radio and television in Africa in the 1980s*

<sup>199</sup> The two smaller colonisers Portugal and Belgium never developed comparable international radio services.

fan and broadcaster of Congolese music ever since on all the stations for which he has worked. He continues to broadcast Congolese music to the world on American public radio.<sup>200</sup> The fact that national broadcasters in newly independent Africa seem to have been almost as keen on broadcasting Congolese music as their own needs explained by looking at individual countries but some more general explanation is needed as the phenomenon was so widespread.

In part this phenomenon was due to the activities of the Greek and Israeli entrepreneurs who first recorded the music in the 1950s and supplied the retailers and broadcasters of the continent, alongside the closely intertwined supply networks of the major record labels. Ngoma's records were exported to the national broadcasters all over Africa. 'The radio stations were Ngoma's major advertising agents. The Jérónimidis brothers sent complimentary copies to most of the central African stations to provide adequate promotion of their products'. (Graebner 1996: 6)<sup>201</sup>

The extent to which political control was exercised over the musical content of nationally controlled broadcasters in Africa after independence might have meant Congolese music was kept out, even with this marketing capacity, but many of Africa's leaders actively invited Congolese musicians to come and perform at national events like independence day celebrations. Given this, a fan of the music like Kenneth Kaunda, or even nationalists like Sékou Touré and Nyerere, were

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<sup>200</sup> Part of the back catalogue of Collinet's recent broadcasts, that include some on the history and development of Congolese music can be read and heard via the Afropop website - [http://www.afropop.org/radio/radio\\_archive.php](http://www.afropop.org/radio/radio_archive.php)

<sup>201</sup> Ngoma was the first record company in Leopoldville.

prepared to allow the music over the airwaves. This political acceptance and at times encouragement was not the only factor. More important has been the growth of radio ownership on the continent generally and the technological development of the transistor radio. The exponential growth in radio ownership and listening hours has provided the conduit for the diffusion of Congolese music that has sat beside the relentless touring of the bands, and settlement of the musicians around the continent. Until transistor radios were marketed in the 1960s the price and electricity demands of radios put them out of reach for most Africans, especially in the countryside. In the 1960s the price of sets, their size and the amount of power they required all came down, and ownership in Africa rose rapidly, particularly in music mad Congo (Fardon, et al. 2000:1-28). When television arrived that too saw ownership rise.<sup>202</sup> Congo has followed the general trend of steady and substantial increases but has outstripped the continental increases and been ahead from the beginning especially when compared with its immediate neighbours. In 1970 Congo Kinshasa is recorded as having 148 radios per thousand population compared to Kenya's 23, Nigeria's 50, Tanzania's 58 and South Africa's 181.<sup>203</sup> These figures mirror the way the mediaization of Congolese music has occurred before those of its competitors. This has given the Congolese an advantage in establishing their market presence. The substantial level of record player and radio ownership in the domestic market in the 1960s was a necessary part of the early growth in the country of a music industry that could support the major continental success of the big bands of the second

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<sup>202</sup> Judging the reliability of the following figures is difficult so they should be taken with some caution, especially the anomalous figures for Congolese television ownership.

<sup>203</sup> See appendix 4 for full figures on radio and television ownership. Unesco figures. [http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/yearbook/tables%5CCultAndCom%5CTable\\_IV\\_14\\_Africa.html](http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/yearbook/tables%5CCultAndCom%5CTable_IV_14_Africa.html)

generation. At the same time the steady growth of radio ownership on the continent has provided them with an ever-growing conduit for the marketing of their music.

**Kanda** - Congolese radio is the one that made our music become so popular all over Africa. People used to listen to Kinshasa radio more than records. When they heard it on the radio they wanted to buy it.

*-So was there a lot of music on the radio?*

**Kanda** - All the time. All the time, just a little break. Then more music. The news was there but not long.

*-Was that Mobutu's policy do you think?*

**Kanda** - In a way. The Congolese people at that time were not so interested in news. The only people interested in news were the French intellectual types, the people weren't interested – they had no time for news. As long as they can get their food and beer after that it's music (interview in Manchester 18/11/04).

Kanda may have some reason to make this assertion given how strictly Mobutu's government censored news.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Interviews with broadcasters.

## **Television and Radio under Mobutu**

The torch of Congolese music that burnt through the 1950s and 1960s over the airwaves transmitted from Brazzaville with the 50 kilowatt short wave transmitter installed by the French was passed to Kinshasa in 1966. This was the year after Mobutu took power and when he began to invest the still substantial state revenues from minerals in broadcasting. He started by investing in a huge new, state of the art 600-kilowatt transmitter supplied and installed by the French national broadcasters, who also trained maintenance staff. Secondly Mobutu invested in a satellite link that gave far better reception for African listeners. This was the Réseau Zaïrois des Télécommunications par Satellite (REZATELSAT). Mobutu 'requisitioned' certain Congolese students in Paris who had to stop their studies. They were put through training in the French Institute National Audiovisuel (INA) for the purposes of setting up television broadcasting. One of those students was Isidore Kabongo Kalala now the director of programmes at Radio Télévision Nationale Congolaise (RTNC).

**Kalala** - A minister of information, called Kubeta Libanga, approached me in Paris after Mobutu took power in 1965. He told us that Mobutu had met Ivorian leaders who already had television by 1965. These leaders had told Mobutu that by using television he would unify the whole population. Political slogans, political instructions, political directives could be sent everywhere at the same time, very quickly. Seeing as people love the television the people could be well indoctrinated with all that national unity

stuff. So Mobutu decided after that he absolutely needed television. There was nobody here in Zaire who could start that television station before we were trained.

*- Do you think his first reason for starting the television station was to create national unity?*

**Kalala** - It was first of all for his self-promotion. To implant his propaganda in peoples heads. National unity was a means to achieving more effective power because you have to remember there was resistance. In Katanga, in Kasai, all over the place, the whole of the East and Gisenga even here in Kinshasa there were those that wanted revenge for the death of Mulele. Even Bandundu, his home region, was not solidly behind him. So he had to find a way of getting people to accept his authority everywhere and the radio would not suffice. He had to have television so that he would be *seen* everywhere.

*- How long did it take for this secessionist spirit and the Katangan nationalist sentiment to fade?*

**Kalala** - It's diminished now to a great extent. After 1965 when Mobutu took power the feeling developed in the people that they were really part of one country. That was the key to Mobutuism. He was a dictator, but he was a dictator who did a good thing. He put the idea in our heads that we were

first of all Zairian before being Kasaian, Katangan, Equateurian, BaKongan we were first of all Zairian with one country called Zaire. That national sentiment was something Mobutu really gave us, to be really proud of being from one country. But in everyday management there was and still is this tribalism. So for example a minister of the interior choosing collaborators will choose people from his village or area. In the army under Mobutu all the top generals were from the Ngbandi, from the little region around Gbadolite.

*- In the 1960s and 1970s were the regional transmitters properly maintained?*

**Kalala** - Oh certainly. You have to say that Mobutu worked hard with the countryside. There was a time that Mobutu wanted to deepen his power over the country. So that everybody could hear him properly he decided that all the regional transmitters had to be renewed. So he established a big co-operation with the Germans (Siemens) to install new transmitters and to reinforce some existing ones. That was in 1969 and 1970. We did that at the same time that the television was being established. That was in preparation for the elections to give a democratic veneer to his power. So when Siemens installed the new transmitters in the smallest little village they could hear the radio. That was how this huge studio complex was built.

*- So when the price started to go down in 1974...*



**Kalala** - In 1976 and 1977 things started to be very difficult. The amount of money coming to us in the radio and television, like for everybody stopped flowing. But people didn't leave their jobs. We weren't private where if there's no money you say goodbye. You stay in your work here and you have your second office in town. We call that *extra muros*, work on the outside. That's how we survive. I was a teacher of Latin and Greek on the outside. Here we have *Article 15*. It was the same for the orchestras from 1967 to 1975. They had money. They all got money to sing his propaganda. There were so many bands to the left and right. Mobutu had more confidence in the old orchestras, Franco, Tabu Ley, Kassanda, Kalle Jeef because they were of his generation. When Papa Wemba, Zaiko and all that came along he wasn't sure of them, these young ones. So he didn't give them much. They got their money from the children of Mobutu; Mobutu's children were big friends with all these musicians in Zaiko and Thu Zaina, all these *Belgicain*. They were all *Belgicain*. These *Belgicain* were often *films à papa, papa* who was there with Mobutu's money. So at the same time as doing their studies they were playing music.

- *So you could say that this third generation is the generation of the children of Mobutu and this generation had some money to spend on the musicians?*

**Kalala** - Yes.

- *Were these new transmitters maintained after 1968?*

**Kalala** - Yes. This is how. A commitment was signed so that Congolese engineers be taken to Germany to be trained how to maintain the new equipment. So once everything was installed by the Germans the first round of maintenance was performed by the Germans side by side with the Congolese. After that the Congolese carried on by themselves.

- *Were they still paid once the price of copper started going down to carry on doing the maintenance?*

**Kalala** - You have to understand that a maintenance engineer here, when he's finished doing the maintenance he's a physics teacher, chemistry whatever that's all. That was the force of the RTNC – that we had such good transmitters. But we also had very good technicians. (Interviewed in Kinshasa 27/09/05)

This interview brings together many of the economic and political threads behind the success of Congolese music after independence. A factor not mentioned by Kalala that added to the tendency of African listeners to shift their attention from Radio Brazzaville to that emanating from Kinshasa was the hours it broadcast. In the 1950s the radio in Kinshasa started broadcasting through the night until three in the morning when radio Brazzaville stopped at 10p.m. This was the time people relaxed and when atmospheric conditions in the night made it easier to receive short wave

signals. Even in the 1940s the Belgians kept broadcasting an hour longer than the French across the river according to Saint-Eudes.<sup>205</sup> This was a point reinforced by the Cameroonian Manu Dibango who joined African Jazz in Brussels in 1960 and moved to Leopoldville for two years to play with the band.

**Dibango** - There was a big radio, they had a very powerful radio. In French Africa we had radio but not so powerful and only until 10 o'clock at night. But in Leopoldville they broadcast until 5 in the morning that's why they were very popular in Africa because everywhere in Central Africa people were listening to Congo music at that time at night. That's why they were very popular in Africa compared to the other countries because they were the only ones people could listen to at night and you know in Africa everyone is out at night. So the rumba Congolaise was very popular.

(Interviewed by Andy Kershaw 30/04/07 BBC Radio 3)

Mobutu saw the entrenchment of his personal authority as something that would be well served by the construction of a mini city dedicated to television and radio. It was christened the *Cité de la Voix du Peuple*. In 2005 most of its studios are no longer functional. Water damages the irreplaceable national heritage in its archives when the rainy season comes.<sup>206</sup> When the new media facility opened in 1970 there were 18 radio studios, 6 television studios and a 22-storey tower block for the

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<sup>205</sup> Interviewed in Brazzaville 20/09/05

<sup>206</sup> The UNDP and UNESCO are meant to be supporting the RTNC in a project to protect and digitalise this precious national heritage. At the time of writing the project has not got beyond the installation of air conditioning in some of the archives. A problem for the archivists is that the spare parts to repair the Ampex machines that run the two-channel format of the original television recordings are no longer available. They say this is hampering the project to digitalise the archive.

administration. It was linked by way of feeder stations to the whole country. Kalala claimed the whole of the national transport infrastructure could have been rebuilt with the money thrown at the media. With this resource Congolese musicians continued their ascendancy of the airwaves in the 1970s. They were riding on the back of the vehicle that was designed to create Mobutu's personality cult. By the 1980s Congolese music was so established the musicians could rely on national broadcasters around Africa to play the music.

At a time when the new and powerful equipment Mobutu had installed in the 1970s was beginning to age a country for which Congolese music has been a veritable passion established the biggest broadcasting capacity on the continent with the proceeds of oil money – Gabon. The name of the radio station that was commissioned in 1974 and was ready to start broadcasting by 1980 using satellite relays to other national broadcasters on the continent is Africa Radio Number One. The footprint the station now claims covers most of the planet. When it comes to music, which fills a big quota of the airtime, one of the main DJ's is in fact from Congo Brazzaville.<sup>207</sup> The other, Manu Dibango from Cameroon, is a long time collaborator with Congolese musicians having played with OK Jazz.

When television broadcasting from Kinshasa began in 1966 it provided a media channel for the development of Congolese music, now with the aid of a visual as well as an aural form. This allowed for the projection of three important ingredients for Congolese musical culture – fashion, dance and the bearing or the attitude of

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<sup>207</sup> There are scattered references to this station, for instance in Reed 1987, but no dedicated study. See the following for a map of their footprint and more on the group's history.  
[http://www.africa1.com/radio\\_couverture.php](http://www.africa1.com/radio_couverture.php)

musicians. These ingredients provided a new weight to that musical culture as it was projected to the regions of the huge nation. No doubt it has contributed to the surprising extent to which informants from the East of the DRC in the 2000s feel themselves to be Congolese and the extent to which regional variation was eradicated in urban popular music. Television has also provided a context for the development of the skills that subsequently have been used in the production of the music videos that have swept the bars, nightclubs and homes of the continent, and onto long distance buses in the case of East Africa. It has also meant an archive has been built up of Congolese performance styles that has been broadcast regularly over the years on Congolese television. This has meant subsequent generations of Congolese fans and musicians have inherited a wealth of cultural capital to invest in the further development of the music. The contribution that Mobutu's investment in radio and television has made to the evolution and diffusion of Congolese music has not received the academic attention that has been given to the contribution of the French and Belgians. For musicians television provided good money.

*- Was there much music on the television?*

**Mangwana** - Oh yes all the time. We were paid better for appearing on the television than we're paid in Europe. When you appeared on television you could last two weeks without playing.

(Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04)

Zairian television and radio is remembered by informants from all over the country for having provided a consistent diet of music and all the fashion and celebrity gossip associated by it with it.<sup>208</sup> For instance the Saturday night show *Variété* is remembered for providing watchers with performances by the most popular bands. The latest dance steps were learnt off the television to be performed at night in the clubs. The soothing music of earlier generations was played during the day and on Sundays.

There are some major changes taking place in broadcasting in Africa. The effect of these changes on the future of Congolese music is unpredictable. The major change in individual African countries has been the liberalisation of the airwaves and the end to state monopolies.<sup>209</sup> There has been an explosion in the number of private and community radio stations (Fardon et al 2000). The other major change that is taking place is in television. The development of satellite broadcasting within and to Africa is being driven by competition to establish continental dominance between the French station Channel + and the only major African competitor, the South African satellite broadcaster M-Net. They have created a music channel broadcasting to the continent called Channel O ([mnet.co.za/channelo/](http://mnet.co.za/channelo/)). Their growth implies a diminishing of the proportion of airtime that has a national content. Both stations

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<sup>208</sup> The radio and television schedules that informants remembered from the 1980s and 1990s are as follows.

TV and Radio Programming in DRC and Zaire on OZRT

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Bakolo Music | 12-14hrs everyday                  |
|              | 20.30-21.30 Thursday every 2 weeks |

|            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| Hit Parade | 15-18hrs Saturday |
|------------|-------------------|

|         |                   |
|---------|-------------------|
| Variété | 21-24hrs Saturday |
|---------|-------------------|

RTNC 1997 onwards

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Invitée | 13-15hrs Sunday. Lively talk show with musicians. |
|---------|---|

Théâtre de chez nous.

|               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Grand Bazaar. | 15hrs. Culture Theatre Film Music. |
|---------------|------------------------------------|

<sup>209</sup> For an example see Myers 1998 on radio in Mali.

have substantial problems in Africa with the piracy of their programmes by local stations.<sup>210</sup>



Decay of television archive at RTNC.

<sup>210</sup> Channel + sometimes resorts to blanking out transmission of expensive football matches in its transmission to West Africa, much to the annoyance of those who have legally paid for the satellite service.

### 4:3 Greeks, Jews, Multinationals and Les Grand Patrons. Recording, pressing and Distributing Rumba Congolaise



Zonophone Catalogue 1909.

The colonial powers and the American recording companies dominated the international context in which the recording industry developed in Leopoldville. Although the local studios that developed after World War II make Leopoldville distinctive in Francophone Africa the European and American dominated recording and distribution industry was also important for the early spread of Congolese music. The first European based recording companies operating in Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century, like Gramophone and Zonophone, were national commercial representatives of the ruling colonial authorities. The French company



Pathé Marconi was important for distribution in Francophone Africa and provided the link to Anglophone Africa owned as it was by EMI. Belgium was well represented in Africa after the foundation of the Fonior Company in 1929.<sup>211</sup> Germany had Philips and Deutsche Gramophonen, which were established by the Siemens Company in 1898. In 1924 the Deutsche Gramophonen launched the Polydor brand name for overseas marketing.<sup>212</sup> The British had bigger companies, Decca, which was formed in 1929 and the giant EMI, which was founded in 1931. The historic associations of the British and American companies maintained the lead position of the Anglophone majors in the middle of the century in world markets. When the US side of EMI, RCA Victor, broke away in 1958 it continued to maintain close business links with the UK when it formed a partnership with Decca the same year. The complex history of the interaction of the major companies that have created and dominated the recording industry has not, however, remained predominantly national in character. Mergers and buyouts have led to brands like 'His Masters Voice' moving between different companies.<sup>213</sup> A gradual process of consolidation has gone on in the recording industry in the late twentieth century that has entrenched the dominance of the four majors, now controlling around 75% of the world market. The four majors are the Universal Music Group, which has incorporated Decca and Polydor amongst others, Sony BMG Music Entertainment, the EMI Group and the Warner Music Group.<sup>214</sup> This process of amalgamation and

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<sup>211</sup> See Lodge and Badley p.323-328 in Broughton et al. on South African and Egyptian music industry.

<sup>212</sup> <http://www.universalmusic.com/history.aspx>

<sup>213</sup> For instance the Universal Music Group (UMG) created in 1998, which has the largest world market share, was formed by the amalgamation of the American company MCA/Universal Studios and the German company Polygram formed by Siemens and Philips. See Chanan 1995, Millard 2005, Negus 1999 on the recording industry and its history.

<sup>214</sup> Personal communication with John Cowley. See also <http://www.answers.com/topic/decca-records>.

the extensive licensing arrangements developed to market the music of one company in areas where another company had developed its distribution network extended to Africa in the twentieth century. This web of commerce has provided the conduit into which Congolese music could pass from Congolese and Belgian owned Record Companies to the rest of Africa. Amongst the Congolese entrepreneurs after the Greeks left at independence it is only Franco's manager Manzenza who attempted to emulate the methods of the majors by pressing records in Europe and distributing under their own label to Francophone Africa.

## The Record Companies: From Ngoma, Loningisa, Opika and Cefa to Vévé.



‘Congo music enthralled the Senegalese and the Ugandan, it jumped regional boundaries and stylistic differences. It became a kind of Pan African Music’.

(Bender 1996a:8)

The recording industry that developed after the Second World War in Leopoldville was crucial to the spread of the music. Four companies were responsible for this growth. The first to record was the Société Belge du Disque (SOBEDI), which made recordings using a mobile unit, that were sent back to Belgium for pressing and distribution on their two labels – Olympia and Novelty. Some of these records made their way back to where they were recorded and proved popular by 1948. A Greek

entrepreneur, Nicolas Jérónimidis<sup>215</sup>, saw a new business opening. He imported professional direct to disc recording equipment and with help from a friend in a local radio station built the first studio in the back of the shop he had opened that same year. He called the studio *Ngoma*, the Kikongo word for drum (Stewart 2000:26). Having looked around for local talent with a profile established on local radio he signed up two men who were to prove very popular – Henri Bowane and Antoine ‘Wendo’ Kolosoy.<sup>216</sup> Two more Greeks started the second studio, Loningisa (to shake), in 1950 (Stewart 2000: 32).<sup>217</sup> A Jewish family – the Benetar brothers - started a third, Opika records, in Leopoldville East in 1949.<sup>218</sup> The studio became identified with Kabasele’s African Jazz. Mr. Benetar, the director of Opika, was a flamboyant character. He would drive around the African areas of Leopoldville playing any new release he had at full volume from the back of a truck at five in the morning.<sup>219</sup> All these companies used loudspeakers mounted on company vehicles to promote the new music, to distribute records and record players as well as transporting the musicians around the country to help promote the music. Pictured above is the Ngoma truck.

The Greek and Jewish connection meant distribution all over the continent where Greeks and Jews had settled would subsequently be more easily facilitated. One man

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<sup>215</sup> Arnould attributes the dominance of Kinshasa over Brazzaville in the international spread of the music to Zaire’s big population and the Greek entrepreneurs. Arnould 1999

<sup>216</sup> Listen to the track composed as an obituary and praise song for this Greek businessman *Tokanisa Tata Ngoma* (Let us Remember Tata Ngoma) by Léon Bukasa (CD 1 track 4). Here Bukasa sings in Lingala though he comes from near Elizabethville. This song is an obituary for the Greek businessman Nico Jérónimidis.

<sup>217</sup> See Stewart 2000 for details concerning the early days of Congolese music.

<sup>218</sup> Opika came from the Lingala *opika pende* - stand firm. The Benetar family are well known amongst the commercial trading families of Kinshasa that still live there. They were based in Lubumbashi but established trading concerns all over the country.

<sup>219</sup> Interview with Brazzos, one of Opika’s studio band members, in Kinshasa 27/09/2005

in particular made efforts to take the records to the rest of Africa. This was Nikiforos Cavvadias who came to work with Alexandros Jeronimidis, the founder's brother, at the Ngoma studio in 1951. Cavvadias travelled around Africa to set up a network of distributors. When it proved difficult to conduct business in the French colonies from the Belgian Congo, Alex Jeronimidis went to France to open a pressing factory called Disco France. The factory shipped directly to French Africa, thus avoiding the obstacles presented by duties and currency exchange. Ngoma's Disco France factory was the third largest in France. The first factory in Vanves, Seine, had a production capacity of 30,000 78 r.p.m records every three months. At the height of production in the third factory outside Paris 60,000 33 r.p.m and 40,000 45 r.p.m records were produced daily for the African market (Bender 1996a: 4-5). Mangwana says they also did licensing deals with all the majors for distribution around Africa.

This birth of a small indigenous recording industry, albeit in Greek ownership, was very important in the early diffusion of Congolese music. By 1955 up to 600,00 records were sold each year at around one dollar in the Belgian Congo (Stewart 2000: 47).<sup>220</sup> It is interesting that similar and ultimately more substantial and enduring recoding industries in Nairobi, Lagos and Johannesburg didn't produce anything like the same results for the diffusion of the music of those countries. Having a national industry is not a sufficient condition for producing the popularity of that nation's music in the rest of the continent.

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<sup>220</sup> Quoted from *Belgian Congo Today*, a Belgian colonial publication.

The fourth studio Compagnie d'Enregistrement Folkloriques Africains (CEFA) was started in 1953 by a Belgian jazz guitarist, Bill Alexandre, at the invitation of two Greek businessmen. He was also influential musically as he introduced the electric guitar, the use of a pick instead of fingernails for plucking and he taught the musicians how to play in all the different keys. He also allowed musicians to take their instruments home. Records were pressed by the German company Deutsche Gramophon. A fifth studio and distributor Disques Vogue developed in the late 1950's. A state owned company, Société Congolaise du Disque (SOCODI) was established after independence in Congo-Brazzaville with up to date recording facilities and a pressing plant. It started production in 1970. Below is a photo of Bill Alexandre holding a new CEFA release. He is accompanied by the keyboard player Gilbert Warnant and the CEFA house band of the time, which included Vicky Longomba, Antoine 'Brazzos' Armando, Augustin 'Roitelet' Moniana and Roger Izeidi.



Bill Alexandre and the CEFA house band in the mid 1950s.

This was not the only route in the early days of the 1950s. Ngoma set up its own contacts with local distributors in other African countries for the distribution of the records it was having pressed in France. They granted sole distribution rights to people like themselves that started studios and record companies connected with shops in other African capitals. In Nigeria this was Badejo's music store. In Sierra Leone it was with one Jonathon Adenuga (Bender1996a: 8). Tabu Ley, Sam Mangwana and Wuta Mayi all remember how well connected the Greeks were in black Africa. One of the best indications of how the Congolese stole a march on the competition in the 1950s is the work done by Wolfgang Bender on the contents of the Sierra Leonean Broadcasting Service (SLBS) archive (Bender 1988). Ngoma supplied their records directly to the station. Here there is evidence that the records

of the new studios set up in Leopoldville were reaching the West African market in greater numbers than their West African competitors, even though Ghana and Nigeria were nearer and inside the trading networks of the British Empire. What is interesting is that even at this early stage the big international major record companies were taking Congolese music on local labels under license and distributing it. For instance Loningisa records appear in the archive marketed by HMV and Esengo records are on the Columbia label. The number of records from each country in the archives of the SLBS from the 1950s that originated in Africa were as follows.

| <b>Country of Origin.</b> | <b>Number of Records in Archive.</b> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sierra Leone              | 223                                  |
| Southern Africa           | 65                                   |
| Ghana                     | 113                                  |
| Malawi                    | 2                                    |
| Nigeria                   | 89                                   |
| Kenya                     | 9                                    |
| Uganda                    | 11                                   |
| Zaire                     | 203                                  |

In Nairobi Ngoma did a deal with East African Music Stores Ltd, which covered the whole of East Africa. They set up distribution through bureaus in Douala and Brazzaville for francophone West Africa. Alexandros Jeronimidis noted how they achieved a Pan African success the South Africans, even with their larger and older



industry, couldn't match. 'It is totally different music. It was the privilege of Ngoma music to attract the interest of all the Francophone countries and the Anglophone as well, like Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika'. (Quoted in Bender 1996a: 8) Franco's guitarist from this era, Roitelet, discussed how critical he saw the role of the Greek and Jewish entrepreneurs to be in financing the early tours as well as in record distribution.

- *When was your first tour?*

**Roitelet** - Our first tour was to Point Noire, Bas Congo, Bangui and Haute Congo. We flew. The producers invited us paid for the flights. Benetar and Papadimitriou financed those flights. We went to Bangui in 1953. I think that might be the first tour of a Congolese band outside the country. M. Benetar even invited musicians here to take to Ghana in 1952 to do recordings with Bobby Benson with his record company Opika. So we went there to make use of their recording facilities.

- *Did they learn how to play highlife then?*

**Roitelet** - Dechaud and Nico learnt how to play highlife there. But we have that music too. The people over there thought we were Americans because we could play that music.

- *Did the musicians over there try and play like you?*

**Roitelet** - They tried but they couldn't really come near us because we have a secret in the guitar. In all of Africa nobody can play the guitar like us, nor the bass, the drums or the singing.

- *Why do you think Congolese became so famous in Africa?*

**Roitelet** – It was due to the work of the Greeks and Jews that our music became so famous. They contributed a lot. It was the work of these expatriates selling these breakable records who sold more than 1.5 million records of our music in Africa.

- *So how did they manage to do that?*

**Roitelet** – That was their secret. I know how they did that because I worked with Papadimitriou but that's a secret. They had their way, their marketing. Since they left Fonior tried to replace them with Ecodis. But the Belgian Fonior never penetrated like the Greeks. The Greeks sold more than Fonior. They sold millions. Fonior never sold millions. They sold in East and West Africa and Central Africa. They sold millions.

- *Do you think there is something in the music that's important?*

**Roitelet** – The music is important but distribution is more important.

Nothing happens without distribution. People don't know distribution like that now here. Distributors know nothing now, nothing like the level of the Greeks.

*- So why did they stop if they were so successful?*

**Roitelet** – They told us they didn't want to work under the black Congolese authorities. Ngoma and Papadimitriou told me that. I can't carry on with these people. Benetar died in the 1970s. He moved into other business and sold the studio. He took all his back catalogue and sold it abroad. Fonior started Ecodis here with their studio and sold our music abroad.

The era of local Congolese Greek and Jewish commercial involvement with the music industry came to an end at independence when they either left or moved out of the music business. The job of recording and producing records passed to the now independent Congolese. Some Congolese also got involved in distributing records to West Africa – Charles Lukelo and Vava Izeidi, the brother of the musicians Roger Izeidi both started working as entrepreneurs selling Congolese records direct into the West African markets using the outlets established by the Greeks. Until Philips opened a factory and studio called Sophinza in 1969 run by their record production wing PolyGram and the musician Verckys established his own recording facilities in the early 1970s, under the title Editions Vévé, the Congolese could create their own record labels but they became dependent on just two studios. A Catholic priest of the

same name, Mr. Renapeç, ran the smaller and less significant called Renapeç. This studio was not connected with a record company. Bands could record there but would have to go to the company that dominated the recording, pressing and African distribution of Congolese music for the next twenty years. That company was owned by one Mr. Pelgrims and was called Fonior.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> This summary of the situation in the immediate period that followed independence is based on interviews with musicians in Kinshasa in 2005.

## **Fonior and the Majors: EMI, Decca, PolyGram and CBS**

In the 1960s the principal force of continent-wide distribution of Congolese records was to be the major record labels that dominated world trade from Europe and America through their local subsidiaries, especially through deals done with Fonior, but also on occasion using releases of recordings by Congolese musicians touring the continent in local studios affiliated with the other majors like EMI and CBS. A Belgian baron Willy Pelgrims de Bigard owned Fonior, a large Belgian company. Fonior was also Belgium's licensee for the British company Decca. Fonior bought CEFA in 1955 and began the construction of a pressing plant, called Manufacture Congolais du Disque (MACODIS), to service CEFA and all the other studios in Congo. It had a production capacity of two million records a year, Africa's second largest after South Africa by the time of independence. So Congo now had a substantial production capacity. Fonior also provided that second crucial ingredient - distribution. The company had a substantial distribution capacity in Europe and in the rest of Francophone Africa through its Paris based distributor Société Française du Son (SOFRASON). According to Sam Mangwana it also led to access to Anglophone Africa through its connection to Decca, EMI and PolyGram with which it made licensing deals.

**Mangwana** - You know by the 1960s Congolese records were being sold all the way to Senegal. The big pulls in black Africa for music were Nairobi, Lagos, Accra, Kinshasa, Johannesburg and Rhodesia. That was because there was a record pressing industry in these countries. It didn't arrive in the

Ivory Coast until the seventies. Papadimitriou with Loningisa and Ngoma with Jeronimidis, they were the producers and they gave the records to English affiliates for distribution. For the English the connection in Nigeria and Ghana was EMI and CBS and in East Africa it was PolyGram. Pelgrims (Fonior) were associated with the French and the English through Decca. So for instance in Zambia Decca dealt with PolyGram and PolyGram dealt in turn with an English distributor in Zambia.

*- So in the 1960s EMI, or their subsidiaries, started pressing Congolese records in Ghana, Nigeria and so on.*

**Mangwana** - That's how they started pressing our records over there. Sometimes it went over to Belgium but the Greeks and Israelis had many connections. One over there who has bought the rights sells the distribution rights to another somewhere else where he doesn't distribute. That's how the groups of multinationals work. Voila. (Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04)

So Congolese records could be pressed in Rhodesia, Nairobi and Lagos for distribution in South, East and West Africa. Congolese musicians travelled to these production centres in the 1960s and 1970s to do their own deals in Anglophone Africa that circumvented contractual arrangements at home. This led to a whole series of separate releases in West and East Africa by Congolese artists on local

labels.<sup>222</sup> Fonior created the Fiesta and African labels for international marketing of the music recorded in the newly acquired CEFA studios in Leopoldville. This new link presented Congolese musicians with the opportunity of going to the Fonior studios in Belgium, where recording facilities were far superior to those in Leopoldville.<sup>223</sup> Fonior sessions in Belgium in the 1960s became legendary. Contracts called for the recording of forty to fifty songs in two weeks, which meant three to four songs, completed each day. The company also developed distribution capacity inside the Belgian Congo with the creation of a new distributor for their records there called Edition Congolais du Disque (ECODIS). The Fonior Company became a major commercial driving force behind the marketing, as well as European control, of the Congolese music industry before the advent of the Zairianization of foreign owned companies in 1973 and of mass piracy in the 1980s. The company EMI Pathé Marconi negotiated a distribution deal with Franco in 1964. When the nationalised Zairian companies collapsed in the late 1970s musicians attempted to re establish relations with the European bases of the record companies. The same was true of the state created and owned company SOCODI in Brazzaville that collapsed soon after its creation in the early 1970s due to mismanagement (Stewart 2000: 186).

Everywhere it was heard in Africa, and that was nearly everywhere, the music found an audience...Many a fan could sing Congolese songs from memory without understanding a word...Musicians across the continent

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<sup>222</sup> The album *East of Africa: pioneers of African music* 1999 Arcade music group is made up entirely of singles recorded and released in East Africa by Congolese musicians from Kinshasa in the 1960s.

<sup>223</sup> To begin with they had separate microphones and recording tracks for each instrument so a better balance could be achieved after recording.

scrambled to incorporate Congolese guitar arrangements into their own styles. (Stewart 2000: 186)

In the 1970s Congolese musicians worked through the majors that dominated each area of Africa but also found outlets through smaller distributors. For instance Mangwana sold through EMI's Pathé Marconi and Decca in Senegal and Mali, CBS and PolyGram in East Africa but was able to break into the Nigerian market through a local distributor called Rogers, Nico Mbarga's distributor and into Zambia and Zimbabwe through Music Parlour in Ndola. In Zambia there was a South African owned pressing plant.<sup>224</sup> Franco was available, according to Ewens, on the South African owned Teal label in Zambia (Ewens 1994:196).

In the late 1970s production in Kinshasa went into a period of decline along with the rest of the economy.<sup>225</sup> The grand old bands of the second generation sustained themselves through their access to what was left of the Zairian production capacity, foreign touring, running nightclubs and their historic contacts with African based distributors and European record companies. For younger musicians wanting to make a career for themselves the decline in the Zairian economy meant opportunities at home were more limited. Imported raw materials became prohibitively expensive and pushed the price of records up while real incomes were declining which in turn depressed domestic sales. Franco faced huge problems after he was given the MAZADIS pressing plant in 1974 (Stewart 2000: 200). The bureaucracy that surrounded the granting of import licences hampered renewing old record production

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<sup>224</sup> Interview in Glasgow 27/10/04

<sup>225</sup> See Chapter 3 Sections 4 and 5.



equipment. New cassette technology made piracy a real problem for the first time as consumers starved of records looked to the new alternative in Kinshasa. Production in East and West Africa, especially in Nairobi was not affected by the problems of the Zairian economy so musicians and record companies shifted production there and reimported to Zaire. Franco was reduced to melting down old records and re-pressing them in the now ancient MAZADIS factory in the late 1970s (ibid: 240). Fonior went into partnership with Franco to run MAZADIS when Zairianisation was reversed. International record sales began to decline in the late 1970s in world markets and in October 1978 Fonior declared its intention to close their factory outside Kinshasa. This reflected a general decline in their fortunes. The SOPHINZA factory opened by PolyGram in 1970 closed for the same reasons the following year. This left Franco to carry on as best he could with the machinery left by the two companies and with the problems of importing raw materials.

### **Article 15 or Do it Yourself**

Franco's response to this crisis was not to give up. In fact he did quite the opposite. The following interview with Manzenza is an amazing story of entrepreneurial creativity. Franco took control of his international affairs, launching his own labels and continued to be commercially successful in Africa at a time when the majors were floundering to sustain sales levels in Europe let alone Africa where piracy was destroying the market for records in the 1980s.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> See Ewens 1994: 172-183 for more on Franco in this period.

**Manzenza** - Between 1960 and 1980 Fonior distributed Franco's work in Africa outside Zaire and we distributed in Zaire on Franco's label Editions Populaire that was started in 1970. In Kenya PolyGram released them on licence from Fonior. When records were cheap there wasn't much point in piracy because the pirates couldn't produce records much cheaper than the companies. When cassettes arrived in 1980 then piracy took off.

*- There are recordings that I have that were released in Kenya in the 1960s by PolyGram of African Jazz and African Fiesta.*

**Manzenza** - They weren't recorded in Kenya. Musicians took the masters to Nairobi and sold them. There was a Congolese lad called Medico there. But these are secrets. He was a political refugee over there. It was with him that Tabu Ley dealt. He had contacts with all the Zairian artists and PolyGram and he did the deals to circumvent the musician's contractual obligations to Fonior. He did the mediation. They didn't necessarily sign a contract they just handed over the money. Kalle Jeef started this relationship when he was no longer an active musician. After independence he broke with Fonior and started his own label. He started recording in Paris and took the first African Jazz recordings to Kenya to sell to PolyGram. Tabu Ley went via the man Medico and Conga Succes, of Bokelo, and Negro Succes.<sup>227</sup> The fortunes of record companies in Europe were going down. Fonior was forced to close its factories in France and Belgium between 1976 and 1979. So Franco said

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<sup>227</sup> Les Bantous dealt with Decca because they were in the French orbit and they did not access the Anglophone market according to Manzenza.

to me ‘Manzenza what are we going to do now that Fonior is declining – who will do our distribution now? Do your studies’. I did my studies for two weeks. I came to the conclusion that we would have to set ourselves up in Paris to carry on the work of Fonior because distributing our records while based in Africa would be impossible because there isn’t the necessary transport and communications. We did a recording in 1979 in Fonior’s studio but without a contract. They no longer had a contract with us. I will tell you how the end of the contract came about. Fonior didn’t want to break that contract with us. At that time Monsieur Misson who was the director general of Fonior. He was ill and he died. When he died I forged his signature on a piece of paper. They couldn’t check to see if it was a forgery because he was already dead. So that’s how we got free in 1979. So then Franco said now we are going to exploit the territory ourselves. We installed ourselves in Brussels in January 1980. We created a distribution company called Visa 80. It was in that company that we created the office at the avenue Vilain XIX in Ixelles. I was the *patron* of this office with the job of distributing our records in Africa. (Interviewed in Brazzaville 25/09/05)

Manzenza found a factory for production purposes and a European distributor, Musicanova and started distributing directly to wholesalers like Daniel Cuxac in Abidjan who already distributed throughout West Africa. Cuxac awarded Tabu Ley and Franco Gold albums in Kinshasa for the sale of half a million albums in the region in 1982 (Ewens 1994: 179). Monsieur ‘Moustache’ distributed in Brazzaville and Cameroon. Franco also signed contracts with PolyGram for distribution in East

Africa for 15% of the wholesale price plus a flat fee for the masters. Manzenza remembered making more money in East Africa as the region of distribution included Zambia, Botswana and Mozambique. In most of these countries sales were between 1000 and 3000 for each record but in Kenya sales were between 15 and 20 thousand.<sup>228</sup> Angola was supplied directly from Kinshasa with sales usually around 5,000.

**Manzenza** - It was Fonior that supplied Madagascar. Bokelo was very popular in Madagascar. He sold so many there. Dr. Nico was very popular in Sierra Leone that was the most popular for him in the whole of West Africa. His rhythm corresponded to their folklore. Tabu Ley was far more popular in West Africa. The Trio Madjesi was the most popular band in Central Africa. That's why Bokassa invited the Trio there.

*How many would Mr. Cuxac take?*

**Manzenza** - He would normally take about 20,000.

*How many say of the album Mario?*

**Manzenza** - That was our best seller. That got us a Gold Record from PolyGram just in Kenya. That sold 60,000 in Nairobi. They sent records all over the region to his representatives. Mr. Cuxac didn't buy the records. I

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<sup>228</sup> See Chapter 7:2 for more figures on Kenyan record sales and how these figures make Franco's records amongst the top sellers.

gave him the tapes and he pressed it in Abidjan. He sold more than 25,000. Mr. Moustache sold about 5000 in Brazzaville. I sent him 3000 and then another 2000. In Kinshasa we sold 5000 records and 10,000 cassettes. I would go once a year to each of these places (Interviewed in Brazzaville 25/09/05).<sup>229</sup>



Photo of Franco with new 45 release early 1970s.

Another man who managed to establish himself as a *patron*, but who worked through the control exercised by Fonior and the other majors over record production and distribution in Africa is Verckys. Verckys was born in 1946. He is one of the three major commercial actors alongside Franco and Tabu Ley who dominated Congolese

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<sup>229</sup> The sales figures for Anglophone West Africa, for Nigeria and Ghana were, unfortunately, omitted from the interview. See Ewens 1994: 177-179 for more on Cuxac.

music in the 1970s. He still holds sway in Kinshasa over musical politics through his presidency of the musicians union, UMUZA. After serving his apprenticeship in OK Jazz for five years between 1963 and 1969 he went on to invest any money he made from his own music in setting up his own studio and becoming a record producer. He signed many of the best selling acts of the 1970s and reaped the profits of their high sales in the rest of Africa, money he then reinvested in the music business, in his case mixing the importing of all-important musical equipment with new recording ventures.<sup>230</sup>

**Verckys** - While I was still with Franco I started to record some of my own music. While we were travelling in Europe I talked to Pelgrims of Fonior in Belgium. So Franco was angry. I pretended to be ill the day Franco was going back to Africa and I stayed behind in Europe and Franco went back to Kinshasa. I had prepared some of my music. I had the master with me in Belgium. I went looking for a producer who would market my music, without Franco knowing. I went to SOFRASON in Paris...Franco didn't know that I had made arrangements with Fonior in Brussels and SOFRASON and Sonodisc in Paris. When I got back to the hotel I thanked God that Franco had left the ticket home for me. Sonodisc and Fonior gave me money for my music. With that money I bought two VW beetles, one for Youlou Mabiala who was in OK jazz with me. While I was in Europe Franco heard what I had done and he took away my membership of OK Jazz without my knowing. So I said nothing. I was happy with the business that

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<sup>230</sup> See Stewart 2000: 151-153 and 177-180 on Verckys departure from OK Jazz and patronage of young bands. Here Verckys answers Stewart's question concerning the mystery that surrounds Verckys success.

I had started. That was the beginning of my career. I bought a mixing desk and started recording bands in the places where they played in the bars like the *Vis a Vis*. I started buying instruments and Roger Izeidi gave me what I was lacking. Then I went to Italy in about 1970. I had some precious metals with me.<sup>231</sup> I found a small company called FPT that made amplifiers. I said to them I have some precious metals would that interest you. I sold it to them at a knockdown price. With that profit they could expand their production so we signed a contract. From then on all the goods they exported to Africa I would receive 10%. That carried on for many years. All the amplifiers they exported from then on to Brazzaville and Kinshasa for bands and bars I got my 10% whoever was selling the goods.

After that I started importing instruments directly from the factories in Belgium and selling them at a profit here. For instance I could buy goods that sold here for 2000 Belgian francs for 500 directly from the factory. I still demand 10% when I sell amplifiers like Peavey. I would supply instruments to all the musicians – to Franco, to Tabu Ley. I supplied Tabu Ley with the equipment for his tours of Angola – instruments and amplifiers. He had a contract with me for three years. With the profits from this trade I decided to invest in a record factory. At that time the only factory MAZADIS was owned by Fonior. Later Franco owned it. Often when I was getting the records of my bands pressed there would be disputes at the factory. They would say we are pressing Franco's records. The factory cost

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<sup>231</sup> Mercury is the metal rumoured on *radio trottoir*.

me 4 million dollars. It was called IZASON (Industrie Zaïroise du Son). I brought three technicians over from Europe for a month who stayed at the continental. I wanted automatic presses; there were eight of them. I imported the machines to make the sleeves and to print them. I had everything. We started construction in 1980. I had problem with exoneration for the duties on the import of raw materials. I was told I had to have a partner for that. So I found a partner in a bank – SOFODI – to act as the partner buying on credit. So with them I ordered the machines. After 6 months production a problem arose between me and SOFODI. I had imported some vehicles, cars and lorries, for the business. They said seeing as we'd just started I wasn't allowed to spend the money they had lent me. In the meantime I had found out that that in a few years vinyl would be finished. I hadn't realised that in 1980 and I had paid four million dollars in cash to these people. So at the time I started to realise the same thing SOFODI came and put an order on me to close the factory until I paid my debts. I allowed the factory to remain closed because I realised what was going to happen with cassettes killing the vinyl business and I carried on with other business. I still had two million dollars left in the bank. The bank in Belgium thought I was crazy to invest four million dollars in Africa in the first place. The woman tried to persuade me at the time to invest the money with them but I wanted my factory. But when I was taken to court by SOFODI for non payment of my debts I was able to say that they had destroyed the business that was to make the profits to pay them when they



put the injunction on the factory and had it closed. So it was they who then had to pay me for loss of profits!

As far as distribution is concerned I had an office here for domestic distribution that I organised myself for all the bands signed to me. Then in Zambia I organised distribution through a distributor called Kuswayo. They ordered the records direct from me. Fonior were paying me about seven hundred thousand Belgian francs every six months (c.£70,000) in royalties for all the bands that I had signed and recorded whose music they were selling in the rest of Africa. Other than Franco I had most of the most popular bands of the 1970s including some Tabu Ley records. Bella Bella, Lipua Lipua, Empire Bakuba, Kiam, Zaiko Langa Langa, Kamale and my own band Vévé. I signed a contract with Fonior to distribute all that material that I had produced on the Vévé label to distribute on their African label in other parts of Africa. The musicians would keep their authors rights but I paid them cash to buy the commercial rights to sell their music so that I didn't have to pay them royalties.

*- When did Fonior's distribution capacity decline?*

**Verckys** - Well there was Phonogram that distributed Fonior's records in all of Anglophone Africa, in Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria and so on. I opened bank accounts in all these countries, in every country where Phonogram distributed and I got Phonogram to pay my percentage of profits

in each of those countries directly into those accounts. Nobody else had the intelligence to do that. Even when Phonogram was dealing with Franco it was different from me because I was dealing with so many bands that were selling so well. So each time I went to collect my money in Kenya every six months, the same in Zambia. I would have to travel there myself in those days to pick up the money because there was no safe way of getting it to me. It was impossible to convert Kenyan shillings into Congolese francs so I had to go and convert it into dollars on the black market. I would travel all over Africa collecting my money and converting it and then travel to Belgium to put it in my account there.

*- So you had to travel with a lot of money!*

**Verckys** - (Laughs) One time I was stopped in Brussels at customs. I had to go there to get some money to bring back here. I took out five million Belgian francs. (c.£50,000). When the bag went through the x-ray machine they opened the bag and the woman shouted what's that. They called over the police and asked me how I got so much money. At that time I was still young. They thought I was a thief. They took me to the chief of police for questioning. I said it came from my account. They didn't believe me. They asked me how I got the money. I said I was a record producer. They asked me to verify the fact. They phoned the bank to check. The bank replied. 'But five million's nothing there's plenty more than that here.' There's more than a million dollars here.

- *Where were the best countries for selling Congolese music?*

**Verckys** - Kenya worked very well. It was strange because there would be songs that didn't work here but that worked very well over there. For instance the orchestra Kiam worked very well in Kenya and Nigeria but not here. Nigeria worked very well. I would try any new song on the ears of each country. So for example the Kenyans loved the accompaniment best. So when I mixed records for Kenya I would push the accompaniment higher because they didn't understand Lingala and they wanted to dance. When I did it for Zambia there they are closer to us and know something of our language so I mixed it more like we have it here so I would place the vocals higher than the accompaniment. So I had different strategies for each country seeing as it was me that was producing and distributing the records. We did a few songs in Swahili for Kenya. Kenya was better than Zambia. In West Africa the best profits were in the Ivory Coast. There came a time when I had to stop importing equipment because of the accusations from the musicians that I was profiteering from them. But when I stopped then nobody could get instruments and equipment. They ended up renting them. All the musicians got their instruments from me. Only Sosiliso and Franco got their instruments from the government, from Mobutu. (Interviewed in Kinshasa 24/09/05)

## 1980. The Scene in Paris

A new avenue to a musical career appeared increasingly attractive in the early 1980s – moving to Paris and Brussels. The decline in the Zairian economy coincided with the birth of a new market in Europe for African music. Entrepreneurs opened up this market in the music business that started to record and distribute Zairian music in Europe, export it back to Africa and sell licenses to local African producers. Promoters began to book African bands for tours and festival appearances Europe. Although there was no major break through into European and American markets in the manner that was achieved by Bob Marley and reggae more generally after Chris Blackwell of Island Records began recording and marketing it, there was sufficient interest generated in African music to sustain a steady growth in the community of African musicians based in Europe. For a young Congolese musician like Sam Mangwana and the rest of the All Stars, without ownership of a major band, nightclub or label like Franco, Tabu Ley and Verckys, West Africa and Europe began to appear far more attractive. Even members of these major bands began to disappear into the Paris scene when they were given the opportunity proffered by European tours. Kabesele based himself in Paris by the late 1970s.

Small Paris based record producers replaced the role of Fonior for the Congolese that moved to Europe - Eddy Gustave's Eddy'Son, Loukelo Menayame's Star Musique and Richard Dick's International Salsa Musique for instance.<sup>232</sup> LaCoste and Maniatakis started Safari Ambiance in 1978 and recorded M'Pongo Love in 1979

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<sup>232</sup> See Stewart 2000: 255-275 on the small French labels

and Tshala Muana in 1984. Moumouni's Afro Rhythmes recorded Kanda Bongo Man's first album *Iyole* followed by Djessy in 1982. In 1987 a London based label – Hannibal Records- released the material Kanda had previously recorded in Paris. Moumouni also attracted one of the most important collaborations that were to come out of the scene in Paris – between Syran Mbenza, Bopol, Nyboma and Wuta Mayi – who formed the group Les Quatre Étoiles in 1982. A living could be made selling to the new European and American markets. The music became influenced by Zouk from the Antilles, by disco and by the production techniques afforded by Paris studios. Smaller groups formed in Europe and an elite selection of musicians played on each other's recordings.

Like the Greek producers of the 1950s the Paris studios and record companies provided the economic context for musical development in the early 1980's. Of this first crop of Paris stars it proved to be Kanda Bongo Man and Les Quatre Étoiles for whom success in Europe was matched by success in Africa and it was the backing of these European based record companies that gave them the jumping off point to return with quality recordings to Africa even if most of them made their way on to African markets in the form of pirated cassettes. Piracy eventually drove most of the new crop of Parisian producers out of business. The African market was crucial to their economic survival and it had disappeared by the late 1980s due to cassette piracy. Piracy may have destroyed these producers and diminished incomes for the musicians but it also meant the music spread further into African societies and to people who would not otherwise have been able to afford it.<sup>233</sup> Other European

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<sup>233</sup> An indication of the level that piracy had reached by the late 1980s was provided by research of the International Federation of the Recording Industry. They claimed that just one Southeast Asian

based record companies and producers have remained important for Congolese musicians as a more stable economic environment in which to base themselves. Beninois Jimmy Houetinou took on Arlus Mabele in 1986 to produce the album *Africa Mousso*. This heralded the rise of Mabele's star and the beginning of his touring career in Africa. The Paris scene produced a rival to *Les Quatres Étoiles* called *Loketo* in which Mabele and the guitarist Diblo Dibala collaborated. The musicians thrived performing for the expatriate African market in Europe as well as the new international market. For Kanda Bongo Man based in Europe since 1979 organising tours of Africa and making records there has made him more successful than remaining in Kinshasa would probably have ever allowed.<sup>234</sup>

Many of the top bands now maintain two branches, one based in Paris or Brussels and the other in Kinshasa. *Zaiko Langa Langa*, *Papa Wemba* and even a breakaway section of *OK Jazz* have divided themselves in this fashion. The Fourth generation of Congolese musicians have prospered shuttling between the Paris studios, touring internationally and organising big shows in Africa backed by new Paris based record labels that have replaced those of the 1980s. *JPS productions* now distribute the work of *Werra Son's Wenge Maison Mère*, *Sonodisc* that of *Koffi Olomide*, and a smaller label *Simon Music SIPE*, that of *JB Mpiana's Wenge BCBG*. The effect of this flow of musicians away from Kinshasa to Europe may not have been good for the nightlife at home but it provided the recording facilities for the continued flow of the music to the rest of the continent.

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republic 'admitted to the manufacture of around 700,000 pirate cassettes for export to West Africa each month.' Quoted in Stewart (2000: 322)

<sup>234</sup> See Appendix 2 for full transcription of this interview.

## Chapter Five: There is Something in the Music

### 5:1 'Lingala is a Beautiful Language to Sing'

#### The Origins, Spread and Influence of Lingala in the Popularity of the Music

Modern urban Congolese music has a national cohesion to it that is not matched by the music of its African rivals. So how has this national cohesion been achieved in a country with more ethnic diversity than its rivals in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa and with a far more parasitic and dysfunctional state? One of the most important factors in that national cohesion is the evolution of one indigenous *lingua franca*, Lingala.<sup>235</sup> The development of the Congolese music industry has been both aided by and itself played no small part in that linguistic cohesion. The Lingala sound coming out of Kinshasa after independence swept the whole country and became the language of choice for musicians wishing to make an impact on the national and international scene. As young people listening to the music wished to understand the Lingala lyrics of their heroes in areas where the other national languages, Swahili, Kikongo and Tshiluba were dominant, it was Lingala which was the one the Kinois musicians helped to diffuse. It has been this language with which the music has been subsequently associated in the rest of the continent. Lingala is part of the trademark by which the music is known.

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<sup>235</sup> On the history of Lingala see Goyvaerts 1995, Guthrie 1943, Samarin 1986 and 1989, Woods 1994, Yates 1980, Fabian 1983 and 1986 on Swahili and language policy and Mazrui 1998 on language and power in Africa. See also Fabian's website on the differences between Congolese and East African Swahili. <http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/lpca/>

The spread of Lingala throughout the Belgian Congo, rather than Kikongo, Swahili or Tshiluba has its roots then in the synthesis of military rule and economic exploitation of the country by King Leopold followed by the Belgian administration. Lingala was the language for the military, the *Force Publique*, and so the ‘Bangala’ or those who spoke the language were their first choice for this role (Hochschild 1998: 121-123). The language evolved and spread in the course of interaction between Africans and Europeans building on its existing use as a *lingua franca* or vehicular language amongst Africans along the river. The language facilitated the movement of goods along the riverine system that joined much of the country to Stanley Pool (Samarin 1986 and 1989: 232-249). This led to linguistic facts evolving on the ground as the Bangala came into being.<sup>236</sup> The origins of Lingala, and the Bangala people associated with it, are as such diffuse. The term Bangala was first used by Stanley in 1877 to refer to a whole range of peoples that dominated trade on the river – peoples prepared to dominate by force if necessary (Ndaywel è Nziem 1998: 242). Their relationship to Lingala is however not straightforward (Guthrie 1943). These trading peoples included the Loyi, the Bobangi, and the Teke. The etymology of the word has not been resolved conclusively. ‘Whatever the African origin of the word Lingala, its use has a European origin, in the circumstances at the end of the (19<sup>th</sup>) century’. (Ndaywel è Nziem 1998:243. My translation.)

Prior to the development of the rubber ‘trade’, Ndaywel è Nziem suggests there was a process whereby the languages of neighbouring trading peoples began to overlap with each other along the length of the river and that this process sped up with the

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<sup>236</sup> The word Bangala ‘did the job well, as it came to sanction the multiplicity of riverine people between Ubangi’Ngiri and the river, in full cultural and linguistic homogeneity’. Ndaywel è Nziem 1998: 243



increasing amount of traffic along the river at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Lingala became a kind of rubric to designate whatever mix of languages were used anywhere along the river to facilitate communication between different African dialects and languages, as well as any borrowing of words from Portuguese, French and English. Lingala speakers don't necessarily perceive themselves as belonging to the ethnic group, the Bangala, but many do. Missionaries gave intense consideration to the nature of the linguistic environment in which they found themselves in the Congo at the turn of the century (Samarin 1986). As far as the Protestant missionaries were concerned Lingala differed from the other major regional languages. While Kikongo, Kiswahili, and Tshiluba were used regionally, Lingala was thought not to be a mother tongue, but rather a mixture of other languages (Yates 1980: 270).

Mpisi suggests Lingala was made the national African language of choice, especially in Leopoldville where the regional language is Kikongo, as a way of punishing the region for the resistance shown there to colonial rule and as a reward to the Bangala for their collaboration with the coloniser. The Bangala are the people Mpisi claims who were seen as the best candidates for employment as soldiers in the *Force Publique* and so formed its majority, a view echoed by Samarin and Goyvaerts (Samarin 1989 Goyvaerts 1995: 310). 'A soldier shouldn't think or ask questions, which, according to the coloniser, seemed to be the primary characteristic of the Bangala' (Mpisi 2004: 64). The death toll for the period of Leopold's rule, and immediately after, by murder, slavery, forced labour, disease, starvation and a collapsed birth rate is estimated at around 10 million, or half the population decimated between 1880 and 1920 (Hoshchild 1998: 233). The effects this situation

of extreme insecurity had on the linguistic strategies people adopted to survive is hard to assess but no doubt acquiring Lingala, the language of the *Force Publique*, would have contributed to one's chances.

Mpisi suggests there may have been more practical considerations that led to the Belgian Lingala policy. According to Kanda Bongo Man, of all the major Congolese languages it was the simplest and most easily learnt for the Europeans and by other Africans, and its flexible nature meant it allowed for the incorporation of loan words, whether African or European, without creolising.<sup>237</sup> Lingala had three potential competitors – Kikongo, TshiLuba and KiSwahili. The first two were too regionally and ethnically identified. Swahili was perceived as tainted by its association with the Arabs the colonist fought for control of the East. In addition as the language of the East it was spoken far from the centre of political gravity in Leopoldville. In the inter-war years there was resistance to the adoption of Lingala over Swahili by colonial commercial mining interests in Katanga (Fabian 1986). Although this contributed to the use of Swahili in the East it did not mean Swahili came to rival Lingala's relationship to power through the military.

When Mobutu came to power in 1965 he kept Lingala as the language of the military extending its use into the administration. Mobutu pursued the policy of imposing administrators from Kinshasa, and hence Lingala speakers, on the interior, where Lingala was further entrenched as the language of power.<sup>238</sup> The history of the

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<sup>237</sup> A view echoed by Guthrie 1943

<sup>238</sup> 'In some cases, government officials who do not speak Lingala amongst themselves will nevertheless give orders to their subordinates in that language, even if poorly spoken, not least

association of Lingala with power, often abusive power, at the same time as trade and popular culture, has done little to diminish its appeal, or rather its importance as part of a Congolese citizen's survival kit in dealing with power. Goyvaert's investigation of the widespread use of Lingala in Eastern Congo in the town of Bukavu in the 1990s, where Swahili is the historic *lingua franca*, leads him to the conclusion that the use of Lingala is still growing. The appeal of Lingala popular music is as much a cause as effect of the spread of the language for Goyvaert. It was aided by Kinshasa's domination of radio and then television by Lingala. There are still no regional television broadcasters in 2005. Kanda Bongo Man can speak Swahili but chooses to sing in Lingala even in East Africa.

*- So really you haven't even made one song in Swahili like Brenda Fassie from South Africa did with her song Nakupenda?*

**Kanda** - But nobody would buy it if I sang in Swahili.

*- You mean in Kinshasa?*

**Kanda** - Even people from this Swahili speaking region when it comes to singing they sing Lingala.

*- But if you want to sell more music in Tanzania or Kenya or Uganda isn't...*

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because its use in many contexts is equivalent to being in control of the situation.' Goyvaerts 1995: 310

**Kanda** - Lingala. It's Lingala. Themselves they want Lingala.

- *But they don't understand Lingala!*

**Kanda** - It's still Lingala. It's crazy! My best sellers there are in Lingala even though they don't understand. But it's like if I buy some music by Michael Jackson, maybe I don't understand it but I still enjoy it as music.

- *Why do you think Lingala is so popular for music throughout Africa?*

**Kanda** - I've spoken with many people in Ivory Coast, Cameroon and so on and they say that for them Lingala is one of the most wonderful African languages. I ask them why? Most of them will say that when they listen to us speaking, just speaking it sounds like you are singing. I said 'How come?' Sometimes when we were speaking Lingala they just watch us. We found some girls in Abidjan. One of the girls we met had never been to the DRC but she could speak fluently. She's learnt it from the music with her friends! Everything perfect. Incredible. It's very easy to pronounce that's why people find it easy to learn. Lingala is very simple inside. (Interviewed in Manchester 18/11/04)

Maybe because so many of its continental fans do not speak the language the musical quality of Lingala is also regarded as central to the popularity of the music by fans.

In Kenya Congolese music is known as Lingala music. Kanda is clear about the value and power of Lingala in trading his music outside its home. The comparison he draws with the American English of Michael Jackson points to the high status Lingala attained internationally in Africa. Lingala appears to have acquired a status with some similarities to the status of English, according to Kanda amongst others, but in this case without the economic and military power that lies behind the international dominance of English.

Lingala is associated with Kinshasa, its high status and visible display of wealth on television. Speaking Lingala is a way to connect oneself with that status. The concentration of wealth and power in Kinshasa also means speaking Lingala is a distinct advantage when doing business. Mobutu's army and police spoke Lingala. Given their rent seeking habits speaking the same language was important for any citizen. But Lingala also became the language of popular music. Being able to speak Lingala, especially for the youth of each generation, was and is important in being up to date, for being modern (Goyvaerts 1995: 312). Congolese musicians, like Ndala Kasheba from Eastern Congo, who left in the late 1960s say they witnessed the decline of Swahili in popular music in Eastern Congo and the rise of Lingala after independence.<sup>239</sup> In the 1990s the role of the music in strengthening Lingala in the east continued. 'The near totality of the new generation of Zairois actually learn Lingala (the language of choice of the new music) so as to better appreciate the latest releases inundating the record market.' (Olema 1984:1 My translation.) The unifying

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<sup>239</sup> Interviewed in Dar Es Salaam 20/03/02 Listen to track 6 (CD 1) for an example of a Swahili Rumba love song, sung by Léon Bukusa from Katanga and recorded in Leopoldville in 1955. This is an interesting track because of the influence of South African music on the horn arrangement, an influence that was strong in Katanga in the 1950s. Listen to tracks 8 and 9 for 1950s South African township jazz (CD 1). The Manhattan brothers performed in Katanga in the 1950s.

embrace of Lingala is an important factor in the ‘one nation’ nature of Congolese music. ‘In the two decades prior to independence Rumba Lingala ... altered Congolese ideology by encouraging an expanded understanding of community along national rather than ethnic lines’ (Wheeler 2005). Swahili, Kikongo, and Tshiluba, alongside French, continue to be widely spoken but it is Lingala that has triumphed in song across all the regions where they are spoken and it is Lingala that has provided the linguistic glue for the national nature of the Congolese musical project.<sup>240</sup>

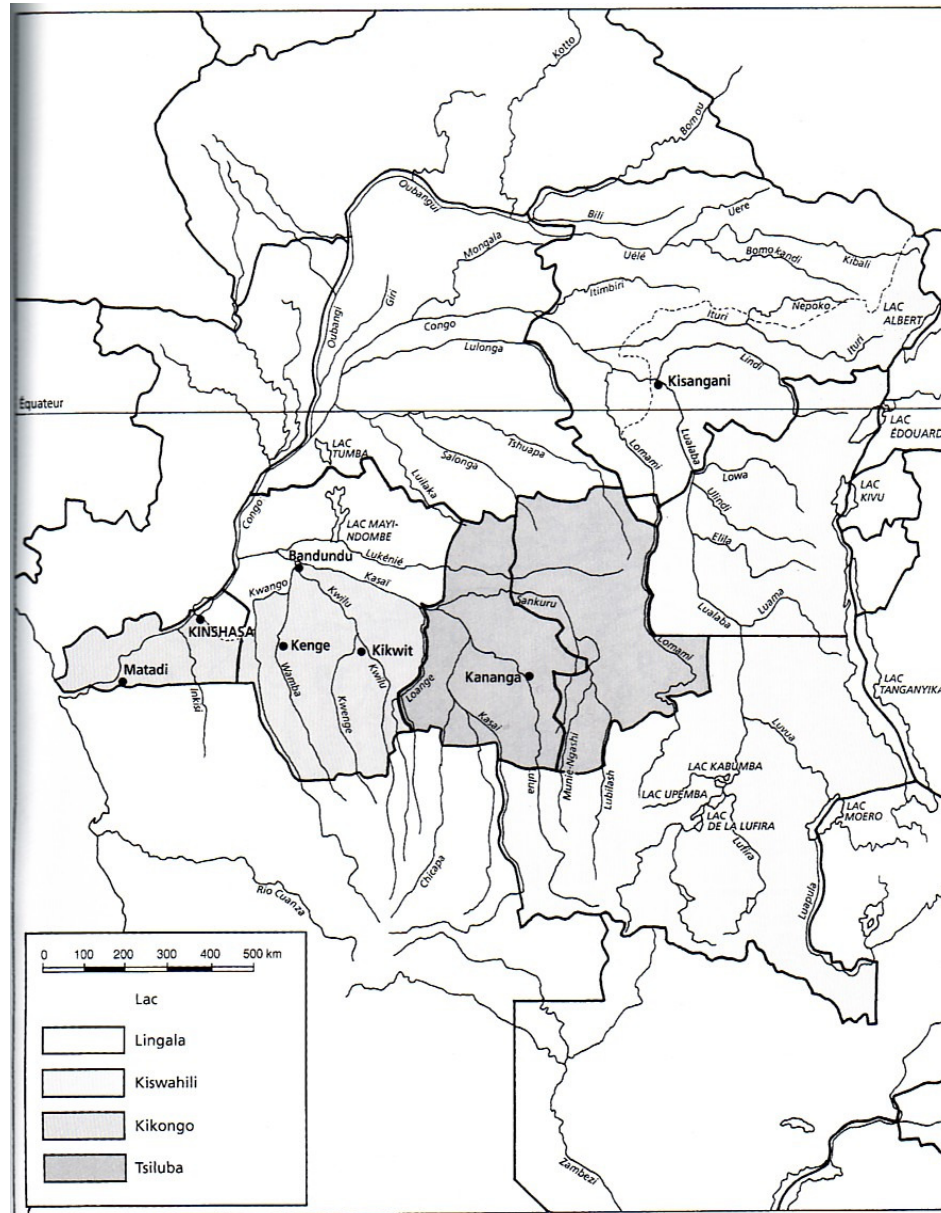


Laurent Kabila on the renamed Boulevard Du 30 Juin commemorating his arrival in Kinshasa.

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<sup>240</sup> This was no forgone conclusion given that the major industry, and the workers and urbanisation that went with it, was in Katanga at independence. The arrival of the Swahili speaking Kabila family in power has not resulted in a rush of Swahili popular music from Kinshasa.

## National Languages of Congo<sup>241</sup>



<sup>241</sup> Taken from Ndaywel è Nziem (1998: 25)

## 5:2 Rumba, Soukous, Kwassa kwassa and Ndombolo. *Il faut dancer*

Speak to fans of Congolese music and you will hear the words rumba, *soukous*, *kwassa kwassa* and *ndombolo*.<sup>242</sup> In Africa the continental popularity of Congolese music is associated with the names of these, the principal dances of the second, third and fourth generations. Indeed the music has come to be known both inside and outside Africa by those names. For many of the African fans of Congolese music it is as much the quality of the dances they now see on their video screens and live in their stadiums that has attracted them to the music as it is the music itself. For many fans of Congolese music that could not understand Lingala it has been the active learning of the dances that has provided the all-important ingredient in the attraction of the music. For fans the dances provided, and still provide, the means of interacting with the music. As with their music the Congolese have applied the first rule of modernity to their dance forms – perpetual change. This is also important for their commercial success. The second rule they have adhered to is maintaining a distinctly Congolese quality to their dances. The dances of the fourth generation are more Congolese than they were in the early years of the second generation when the influence of Latin dance forms was still strong - rumba has been replaced by *ndombolo*. That said Congolese rumba and the dances of the second generation are still distinctive and there were many dances created by the second generation other

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<sup>242</sup> The origins and meaning of these four words for the dances and music are hotly debated. See appendix 5 for a summary. See the attached DVD for an SABC documentary based on this research in which Wendo Kolosoy's band, Victoria Bakolo Miziki, and fans perform dances of the first three generations prompted by the present Chissala. This is followed by Papa Wemba's dancers, *fioti fioti*, rendition of the *ndombolo* and the most recent dance, at the time of writing, Werra Son's *kisanola*. They are directed by Papa Wemba's choreographer.



than the rumba appropriated from Latin America.<sup>243</sup> The dance by which the fourth generation is known – *ndombolo* – has no linguistic associations with Latin America. The dance itself is pure sexy Kinshasa, the place where the country continues to come to town.

Gasping, a beautiful girl is propelled towards the pit, a heaving mass of 30,000 men. She recoils in panic, arms flailing, arching herself backwards almost to the boards. But, as the beat throbs, resistance is hopeless. On she is drawn, by the omnipotent will of her own thrusting hips. She reaches the edge of the stage, and the tempo soars. The dancer is transformed. Ecstasy grips her. Howling she grabs fistfuls of air, writhing in a blur of blue latex and spangled fur. The song peaks. The dancer makes a last bone-juddering lunge, freezes, and staggers drunkenly to the wings. In the pit, or rather, on the pitch of Kinshasa's main football stadium, thousands of half lit faces are roaring. Your correspondent discovers that he has dropped his pen. (The Economist – 20/12/2003)

As this piece lucidly evokes the dances of the fourth generation are sexually explicit. This is a big part of their appeal and of the music according to fans and non-fans alike. An anecdotal indication of just how sexy it can be and how appealing this has been to African audiences came in an interview with a Zimbabwean woman. At the time of her first exposure to Congolese music it was before her family allowed her out to nightclubs. In 1997 Pépé Kallé came to the provincial town where she lived

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<sup>243</sup> See appendix 5 for full list of dances by generation and band.

near Harare and did a ‘family’ show in the afternoon. She and her friends persuaded their parents to let them go. What she saw astounded her for there on stage they were performing secret dances and movements that she had only seen during female initiation preparations for marriage. There they were brazenly performing these moves on stage and the crowd went wild. After that her and her friends were always sure to go to any visiting Congolese shows and hunted down videos.<sup>244</sup>

Dance has taken on a more significant role in the continental popularity of the music now there is a visual medium for diffusion. The advent of the video clip in the late 1980s provided a whole new marketing medium. As with records and radio they were the first in Africa to make use of video clips to market their music in Africa. The Congolese began to make clips of their latest hits by videoing stage shows. The latest dance steps performed during the hot *sebene* instrumental break feature prominently in these videos and as on stage provide one of the highlights of any show. Big prestige gigs in Europe, especially at the biggest venues like the Zenith in Paris, provided the opportunity to use all the technical facilities of such venues to make videos that showed off the latest Congolese dance moves. The filming of shows was soon supplemented by a video industry at home and in Paris and Brussels in which dance and an array of high fashion feature even more prominently.<sup>245</sup> Indeed in many of these videos the musicians playing instruments have disappeared altogether, leaving the singers and dancers for the attention of the viewers.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Interviewed in Edinburgh 02/06/06

<sup>245</sup> See Chapter 5:2 on Television and Video for a more general view of the role of these media in the diffusion of the music.

<sup>246</sup> See the studio made video clips of the stars of the fourth generation to observe the format. These are available online where the huge number of these videos can also be seen, especially those of Koffi Olomide. See Chapter 1 on the four generations for the names of these stars. Older musicians like

Prominent amongst these has been Koffi Olomide, a star who has been able to fund the making of videos in Paris, '*Affaire D'Etat*' in 2003 for instance. The dancing became so pornographic in Ivorian *mapouka* videos and some *ndombolo* videos that they were banned in some African countries.<sup>247</sup> An indication of the dominance of the Congolese in the video and DVD trade in Africa is the sheer number of Congolese music videos available for sale through international Internet outlets in Europe and America compared with any other African country.<sup>248</sup> The rise of videos playing Congolese dance on television in bars and public spaces across Africa has created another avenue for the music.

The significance of dance in the development of Congolese music after independence goes back to its origins in urban bar culture. Urbanites and a constant flow of people from the countryside met in bars. This is where the creative contribution of Kinshasa's urban villagers to the cultural repertoire of the musicians has been made as the cosmopolitan Latin and European, the Kinois and the rural have fused and new life is breathed into old dances.<sup>249</sup> Fourth generation musicians like J.B. Mpiana and Werra Son still profess to look to rural influences for inspiration with pride at the same time as wishing to expand their cosmopolitan horizons. The first distinctively Congolese urban dance, that is well known, is the

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Madilu, King Kester Emmeneya, Nyoka Longo of Zaiko, Papa Wemba and Kanda Bongo Man that still produce videos in 2005 have moved in this direction too.

<sup>247</sup> See the following on the banning of *mapouka* and *ndombolo* in Cameroon [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/851033.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/851033.stm) and more about the origins of the dance in the Ivory Coast and its influence and banning elsewhere in Africa [http://perso.wanadoo.fr/marc.gballou/adeka\\_le%20mapouka.htm](http://perso.wanadoo.fr/marc.gballou/adeka_le%20mapouka.htm)

<sup>248</sup> [africanmusica.com](http://africanmusica.com) – [sternsmusic.com](http://sternsmusic.com) – [natari.com/zaire.htm](http://natari.com/zaire.htm) – [panafricanallstars.com](http://panafricanallstars.com) – [musicvideos.the-real-africa.com](http://musicvideos.the-real-africa.com)

<sup>249</sup> See appendix 5. Informants described this mixture of cosmopolitan and rural influences in the dizzying proliferation of dances.

*maringa*. In the synthesis of indigenous and imported elements in this dance all the hallmarks of urban hybridity are already evident by the 1940s.<sup>250</sup>

With the rise of bar culture in the post war period the intimate relationship between Congolese music and dance became firmly established. Dance, fashion and bearing became the way fans had to establish their own creative terrain in tandem with the creative development of the musicians. The musicians fed off this creative input to add to their shows. A Rwandan, who was first exposed to the influence of Congolese music while at university in Butare in the 1960s said that part of the attraction of Congolese music was the fact that the leisurely steps of Congolese rumba meant people could dance all night.<sup>251</sup> By contrast its main competitor in this era – the American twist coming via Nairobi – was a dance performed by especially good dancers who conducted competitions with each other. When Congolese rumba was playing the dance floor filled with couples. When music for the twist was played it was only ‘experts’ who dared take to the floor.

From the start of the Congolese touring of Africa they became famous for their stage shows and the quality of their dancing. The central role of dance in any big Congolese stage show was firmly established after Tabu Ley’s show at the Olympia in Paris in 1970. Le Trio Madjesi was a band for which dance became very important in the early 1970s for their international tours and were famous for using James Brown’s moves. They drove fans on the dance floor to a new level of hysteria.

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<sup>250</sup> See Kazadi wa Mukuna, Kazadi (1992 and 1999a) for more on this early phase in dance history.

<sup>251</sup> Interviewed in Edinburgh 28/12/05

<sup>252</sup> The new dances were quickly learnt across the Central Africa in nightclubs even before the development of television in Zaire.<sup>253</sup> Kanda Bongo Man has come to be known in Africa for his dancing almost as much as his singing. He is synonymous in East Africa with the dance by which his music is known – *kwassa kwassa*.

*-So when you are doing a show in Africa do you do a different show from one in Europe putting in the latest Congolese dance, like kiWanzenza?*

**Kanda** - We combine all the dances. They like to see the new ones but they like to see the old ones too like *kwassa kwassa*. Even in one song I can combine a new dance like *tshaku libondas* with *kwassa kwassa*.  
(Interviewed in Manchester 18/11/04)<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Loko Massengo sang with both *Vox Africa* and *Le Trio*. England 06/03/04 Stewart 2000: 174 The 1974 visit of James Brown was part of the musical extravaganza that accompanied the world title fight in Kinshasa. See the film *'When we were Kings'* (1996).

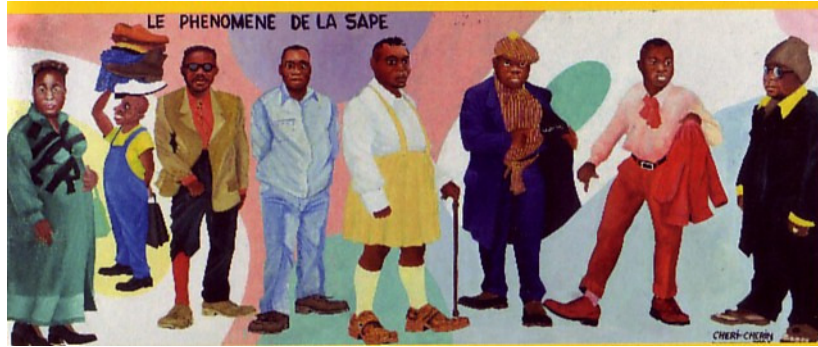
<sup>253</sup> According to Mangwana interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04

<sup>254</sup> See appendix 5 for a list of all the dances and their meanings.

### 5:3 Fashion.

**In search of elegance: Clothes and the cult of *Kitende*.**

**From *Muziki* to the dance of the *Sapeurs* - *Griffe Dindon***



Cheri Cherin *La Phénomène De La Sape*. 2005

Congolese musicians have always been associated at home and abroad with high fashion and this has been part of their appeal to a continent going through rapid urbanisation. High fashion is a way to immediately identify oneself as an urbanite and a sophisticated urbanite, a condition to which so many Africans moving to town from the country aspired in the late twentieth century. Clothes, shoes, hair, skin and smell became the field in which to convey one's urban status to the world.

Congolese musicians from the 1940s onwards were drawn close to the world of fashion. By the dark days under Mobutu in the 1980s it had become an obsession and a strange field of free expression in a suffocating world of political repression and economic turmoil. This was when *Le Sape* and *Les Sapeurs*, when the worship of cloth (*Kitende*), took hold. Wildly expensive Japanese and Italian designers and their designer labels (*Griffe*) were prominently displayed when descending to the

dance floor.<sup>255</sup> *Le Sape* stands for *Société des Ambianceurs et Personnes Élégantes*.

Papa Wemba and his band *Viva La Musica* were at the forefront of the movement but others of his generation were all absorbed. Koffi Olomide videos are as much a fashion parade as they are displays of music and dance. This enduring concern with fashion and personal style has deep roots in Congolese urban society.

The role of clothes was an important element in the tense negotiation of status between colonisers and colonised. The maintenance of distinctions of all sorts, including clothes, was an obsessive concern of the colonisers as was the task of breaching them by the colonised in colonial Brazzaville (Martin 1994 and 1996). Emulating the fashions of the colonisers as a way of transgressing those boundaries provided intimations of how those fashions would be used in fashion contests amongst the colonised. This was written in 1903.

They were barefooted and the tops of their white shirts floated outside their trousers. You may be laughing at shirt-tails outside the trousers, but for the native this is the last word in elegance. I tried several times to get my boys to dress like you and me with shirt tucked inside the trousers, but they said that that is for whites and continued to do it their own way. (ibid. 1994: 405 quoting Gaston Bouteillier, *Douze mois sous l'équateur* (Toulouse, 1903), 73-4)

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<sup>255</sup> This obsession with fashion has been the subject of some academic interest. See Biaya (1996), Gandoulou (1989), Gondola (1993 and 1996 and 1999) and Wong (1999: 165-186). Martin (1994) has placed the phenomenon in historical context. Tchebwa (1994: 194-204) gives a good account of the principal elements of the phenomenon.

Martin makes the claim that although the fashionable clothes of the *sapeurs* in the 1980s are of Western origin the social uses to which they are put are indigenous – a kind of sartorial extraversion.

The *sapeurs*, who have appropriated fashion as a means of asserting their position in society, have not departed from the old tradition, they have merely stood it on its head. Through displaying their unique stylishness in a ‘cult of elegance’, they contest and conceal their social marginalization as their ancestors once used cloth, jewellery and insignia to confirm and display their power. (Martin 1994: 426)

In the 1950s Greek and Jewish commercial traders saw how important the status and fashion of clothing from abroad was to the Congolese. They saw how their new ventures with musicians could be used to advertise new clothes. When a new line arrived in the shops it was the musicians that were used to model the clothes and establish their fashionability when doing the rounds of nightclubs.<sup>256</sup>

‘Basile Papadimitrou sometimes brought several Loningisa musicians down to play at his shop, especially when a new pattern of cloth was to be introduced. Their music turned the arrival of merchandise into a full-fledged event, luring customers in off the street to check out the fresh designs and the latest songs’. (Stewart 2000:47)

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<sup>256</sup> This practice was confirmed by musicians still alive from this generation in Kinshasa and Brazzaville. Brazzos and Essous both talked of this practice in Ngoma and Opika studios.



This served the musicians well at home and abroad because many of the same concerns about the status projected by clothes were of concern elsewhere on the continent.<sup>257</sup> It was traders and sailors from Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria who prided themselves on their attire as they strolled around the Congo capitals on the week ends and the Congolese learnt first to emulate and then surpass as with their colonisers (Martin 1994: 410). Competitive elegance clubs were formed in the 1950s and young people posed in public copying attitudes from magazines (Kenis 1993: 7). Female fan clubs, called *muziki* (friendship), were formed in the 1950s. The first all-female social organization of this sort, the ‘Diamant’, was formed as early as 1943 (Kazadi wa Mukuna 1992: 74). These women could only become members of the clubs associated with the top bands if they displayed sufficient elegance and a big enough wardrobe.<sup>258</sup> Wealthy women have also acted as patrons since the days of Mama Angebi and Mama Kanzaku in the 1960s both presenters on Congolese television. *Mama à kilo* continue to play a role patronising their favoured musicians in Europe. Three women, Saghi Sharufa, Eve Ngongolo and Vero Omanga, are famous for their patronage Koffi Olomide and Papa Wemba (Abel Homban Pulusu interviewed in Brussels 03/01/05).

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<sup>257</sup> This is the era when the notion of ‘ambiance’ became so important to musicians and in bar culture. On ambiance see Biaya (1996) and Tchebwa (1996: 252-259) See appendix 9

<sup>258</sup> These associations had their origins in the mutual aid societies of the 1930s which helped provide the basis for women’s financial autonomy. These societies helped remove the restrictive necessity of marriage for young women moving to the city. (See Kenis 1995: 5 and Comhaire-Sylvain 1968)



The women of 'Bana La Mode' and men of 'Bana Amidaz', fans of OK Jazz.

These societies were the precursors of the competition between *sapeurs* returning from Paris with the latest fashions in the 1980s (Gandoulou 1989a). In the 1970s clothes continued to be important to the stage presence and identity of the Congolese on tour in Africa. Bands wore matching outfits by which they were known. *Le Trio Madjesi* were well known for their outfits.

- *Were clothes important to you in the 1960s and 1970s?*

**Massengo** - Oh yes certainly. With Vox Africa we had 4 or 5 different costumes made up. With Trio Madjesi we had our own designer, and we would model for him. Wendo wore 'costume crevate'. With Vox Africa we wore 'costume classique'. In the Trio Madjesi we wore American style clothes influenced by James Brown. (Interviewed in England 06/03/04)

Thus Congolese musicians continued to display their cosmopolitan credentials in the 1970s, incorporating some of the vocal style, dance moves and fashion of James Brown, while touring Africa. With the advent of the *sapeurs* the significance of competition in fashion reached new heights. 'In the eighties this ritual clothing challenge took the dimensions of a real cult whose gods were Yohji Yamamoto, Comme des Garçons and J.B. Weston ...Papa Wemba's 'danse des griffes' is still engraved on everybody's memory' (Kenis 1995: 5). The closing off of political space by Mobutu and the economic collapse restricted peoples avenues for self-expression. This paradoxically seems to have reinforced the role of expensive clothes in popular culture but also more understandably of music and the *vedettariat* generally in Congolese society as a way of affirming and identifying oneself.<sup>259</sup> A *sapeur*, called 'Colonel Jagger', when confronted with the failure of a fashion and music obsessed youth to engage with politics in the DRC in the 1990s by a western journalist replied, 'It's easy for you to talk. But the older generation here have fenced off the world of politics. This is a world where you can't go out and shout on the street, where you suffocate, because there is no room to breathe. I have no weapons, so instead I create a world of my own'. (Wrong 2000: 178)<sup>260</sup>

Many musicians consider the obsession with music and fashion to have arisen in part out of despair with politicians and Congolese political culture. Werra Son sees the

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<sup>259</sup> See White (2004: 177-178) on the way people fabricate personal relationships with musicians, and De Boeck (2004: 55) on the violence that has become associated with obsessive rival fans.

<sup>260</sup> Wrong mentions that he was the manager of Viva la Musica, without mentioning this is Papa Wemba's band, and so central to the *sape* movement. Her explanation of the phenomena was that the heroic efforts to gather the resources for a \$1200 outfit in a collapsing economy, combined with the knowledge and flair to know what to buy and where to get it, proved that the wearer was master of his fate.

role of music in the life of the Congolese as something that gives them hope but also acts as a distraction from politics.

*Do you think music acts more as a form of resistance to the politics and politicians or a form of escape.*

**Werra Son** - You know we have a civil war here we need a distraction from politics and we musicians provide that distraction. (Interviewed in Kinshasa 21/09/05)



In fashion modernity is not expressed only through Japanese or Italian designer labels.

## 5:4 The Latin Tinge - Modern and Authentic?



Don Azpiazu's Havana Casino Orchestra in April 1930 in New York

'The Cuban Rumba and all the other African-American, African Caribbean, African-Latin styles in themselves were already condensed variants of music from diverse African origins'. (Bender 1996:8)

Some people think they hear a 'Latin' sound in our music. It only comes from the instrumentation, trumpets and so on. Maybe they are thinking of the horns. But the horns only play the part in our natural singing style. The melody follows the tonality of Lingala, the guitar parts are African and so is the rumba rhythm. Where is the Latin? Zairian music does not copy Cuban music. Some Cubans say it does but we say their music follows ours. You know our people (the slaves) went from Congo to Cuba long before we ever heard their music. Franco Luambo Makiadi. (Ewens 1994:74)

The main reason why the music of Kinshasa grew so strong and conquered all Africa lies in its spectacularly successful reappropriation of Afro-Cuban music. The slaves deported to the Caribbean Islands were in effect the first Africans confronted with a multiracial and urban environment. Their situation merely anticipated what was to happen later in Africa itself, when colonisation pulled thousands of workers from their villages into the new cities. When Afro-Cuban music reached Congo in the Forties...it was instantly recognised and cheered as a prodigal son coming back home. Which of course it really was: only two generations had passed between the end of the slave trade from Congo to Cuba and the international success of Afro-Cuban music. (Kenis 2006)

Latin music had a huge impact in Africa generally after World War Two, especially in Central Africa (Kazadi wa Mukuna 1999c). The first large Cuban orchestra to perform and record in the USA was Don Azpiazu's Havana Casino Orchestra in April 1930 in New York (Roberts 1999: 76).<sup>261</sup> By May of that year the tune that was to prove a hit all over the world, and especially in Africa, had been recorded by RCA Victor, *El Manicero* (The Peanut Vendor). This is a tune that is played by Congolese bands to this day. The major record companies started exporting the music to Africa.<sup>262</sup> EMI's association with RCA Victor in the USA gave them access to some of these recordings. These were distributed through HMV's GV label and this is the label seen as most important for the spread of Latin music.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> The photo is of the orchestra in 1930.

<sup>262</sup> See Martin (1998: 130- 137), Stewart (2000: 15) and White (2002: 668-73) on this phenomenon.

<sup>263</sup> See Fargion (2004) on the widespread impact of the GV label between its first release in 1933 and last in 1958.




Musicians talked of how they bought these GV label records from the large department stores in Leopoldville in the 1940s that imported records from the British company EMI along with other British goods.

### Discos "His Master's Voice"

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>GV 194 Comienzo — Bolero<br/>Juan Reverero — Conga Ma-<br/>tancera</p> <p>GV 195 The Song from Moulin Rouge —<br/>Mambo<br/>The Terry Theme — Mambo</p> <p>GV 196 Carnavalito<br/>Baion Carrioca</p> <p>GV 197 Samba Sam — Samba<br/>The Children's Samba — Samba<br/>Delicado — Baïlo</p> <p>GV 198 Anything can Happen (Enga-<br/>nadora)</p> <p>GV 199 Istanbul — Mambo<br/>Am I Blue? — Mambo</p> <p>GV 200 Kitch</p> <p>GV 201 Money, money<br/>Quien Sera (Sway)</p> <p>GV 202 Mambo N.º 5<br/>Massa Johnny<br/>Hoy esta mi cocca</p> <p>GV 203 Abril em Portugal<br/>Mexicanita — Mambo</p> <p>GV 204 Shake's Highlife<br/>Mambo Indio</p> <p>GV 205 Xaxado<br/>Juazeiro — Baïlo</p> <p>GV 206 Don't Laugh at me<br/>Te amo</p> | <p>Los tres ases</p> <p>Noro Morales e sua Orq.</p> <p>Francisco Cavez seu acor-<br/>deão e banda</p> <p>Don Carlo e sua Orquestra</p> <p>Noro Morales e sua Orq.</p> <p>Orquestra The Quavers<br/>Vocalista Budoly Pitt<br/>Francisco Caves, seu acor-<br/>deão e sua banda</p> <p>Vocalista Ronnie Harris<br/>Orquestra Mike Mckenzie<br/>Vocalista Lili Verma</p> <p>Perez Prado (El Rey del<br/>Mambo) e sua orquestra<br/>Shake Keane, seu trompete<br/>e todas estrelas de Mike<br/>Mckenzie</p> <p>Luis Gonzaga</p> <p>Santiago e sua orquestra<br/>latina</p> |
|---|---|

\* Com estribilho.

### Discos "His Master's Voice"



**LISTA DE DISCOS**  
**"His Master's Voice"**  
MÚSICA  
LATINO AMERICANA  
(RÍTMO E MELODIA)

Rumbas • Boleros • Congas • Tangos • Valsas  
• Fox-trots • Mambas • Baïles, etc.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>GV 1 True and sincere love — Fox-trot<br/>The peanut vendor — Rumba Fox-<br/>trot</p> <p>GV 2 Sacudiendo mis maracas — Son-<br/>onete<br/>El conero — Son</p> <p>GV 3 El manizero — Pregon Son<br/>El patético — Son</p> <p>GV 4 Romantica mujer — Son<br/>India inglesa — Son</p> <p>GV 5 Mama ines — Son<br/>Tribulin canfore — Son</p> <p>GV 6 Aguardo de navidad<br/>Decimas de amor — Seu corrido</p> <p>GV 7 Un can lan — Son<br/>Alza los pies congo — Son</p> <p>GV 8 El grito de la vida — Bolero<br/>Muler coctel — Son</p> <p>GV 9 All Baba — Rumba musulmana<br/>Dícen que no me quieres — Capri-<br/>cio son</p> <p>GV 10 Nieve de mi vida — Son<br/>Ofelia mia</p> <p>GV 11 Los carnavales de oriente — Son<br/>De que gozar multa — Son</p> <p>GV 12 Pobre corazón — Son, rumba<br/>El panchero — Rumba</p> <p>GV 13 Bado amor — Bolero son<br/>Bade y pluma, no sea — Son</p> <p>GV 14 De mi cubita es el mango — Son<br/>Debaño de la mata — Son</p> <p>GV 15 Un manito suave — Son<br/>Son la vida — China — Son</p> <p>GV 16 Sexteto Habanero — Son<br/>La Chambelona — Son</p> <p>GV 17 Recuerdo imperecedero — Son<br/>Amparo — Son</p> <p>GV 18 Quisiera ser mi estrella — Son<br/>Carmela mia — Son</p> <p>GV 19 Me odias — Rumba<br/>No me maltrates nena — Son</p> <p>GV 20 Crudo desengano — Son<br/>Berta — Son</p> <p>GV 21 Anela — Son<br/>Dora — Son</p> <p>GV 22 Eres mi ira armoniosa — Son<br/>Elena la rumbanchera — Son</p> | <p>Don Azpiroz e sua Orquestra<br/>Casino Havana</p> <p>Sexteto Habanero</p> <p>Trio Matamoros com duas<br/>guitarras</p> <p>Sexteto Habanero</p> <p>Canario e seu grupo</p> <p>Sexteto Habanero</p> <p>Trio Matamoros</p> <p>Orquestra "Los Siboneyes"<br/>Dir. Ciro Deswal<br/>Solista Mercedes Marino</p> <p>Sexteto Habanero</p> <p>Septeto Matamoros</p> <p>Banda Rico Creole</p> <p>Don Azpiroz e sua Orquestra</p> <p>Quarteto Matamoros</p> <p>Sexteto Habanero</p> <p>Don Azpiroz e sua orquestra<br/>Sexteto Habanero</p> <p>Sexteto Habanero</p> |
|---|---|

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Above is a copy of a rare catalogue of Latin music in the archives of EMI that was being marketed in Africa in 1954 by HMV, in this case in Lourenço Marques, along with the wind up record player that meant electricity was not necessary.

The Latin connection is highly significant for the subsequent spread of Congolese music to other African countries because so many were similarly attracted to the music in West, Central and East Africa. One of the reasons for the Congolese continental triumph that began in the late 1950s is that they were the first to domesticate and record their versions of this music. This was most in evidence in the music of African Jazz in which Spanish and ‘Spangala’ became prominent and the percussion and horn instrumentation common to Cuban music – congas, bongos, claves and maracas and the clarinet and saxophone. The guitar replaced the *tres* however. African Jazz also used similar horn arrangements and the rhythms specific to the *biguine* from Martinique, the tango from Argentina, the Dominican *meringue*, Cuban *bolero*, *mambo*, *cha cha cha*, *guaracha*, *son montuno*, *guaguancó* and *rumba*.<sup>264</sup>

The harmonies are usually thirds... Three types of call and response recur: between singer and chorus; between singer and instrument; and between instruments of different sections. Pieces exhibit a combination of homophony and polyrhythm. Melodic interest is concentrated in a single part with subordinate accompaniment, but rhythmic texture is denser and more differentiated across the various instruments. Horns often punctuate, rather than carry the melodic line, except when used antiphonally with the lead singer or chorus. Improvisation generally consists of variations of a

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<sup>264</sup> Less of this influence can be heard in the music of Franco as the opening quotation implies but despite his view that Latin music has African roots he recorded songs in *faux* Spanish or ‘Spangala’ in the 1950s.



motif, often involving a third... The songs typically remain in a single key throughout, and few change tempo. (Wheeler 2005)<sup>265</sup>

The fused Southern European and African musical influences in this music provided the basis for new Congolese hybrid forms that were developed in both music and dance. Kazadi wa Makuna (1999c: 110) sees a shift away from the direct reproduction of Latin dance steps in the adaptation of a Congolese dance, the *maringa*, in the 1960s. ‘After the novelty of the Latin influences had worn off, musicians looked back to the *maringa*, which they could easily interpret on the new instrumentation, and fit to traditional musical patterns and dances’. Musically the specifically Congolese forms can be heard in the way the electric guitar became the focus of a central hot section, the *sebene*, of the classic three part structure of Congolese songs, sandwiched between a slower vocal section at the beginning and a return to the song in the third section. This form became the settled structure, with a certain amount of variation, of Congolese dance music in the 1960s.<sup>266</sup> There is a suggestion this structure found part of its inspiration in the *son montuno* form.<sup>267</sup> Storm Roberts goes so far as to suggest that in Congolese dance bands ‘by the late 1950s their foreign ingredients were virtually all Cuban’ (Storm Roberts 1999: 218) something Sam Mangwana would not accept. Storm Roberts perceives this in the presence of fiddles in response to charanga ensembles on early discs and ‘fairly

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<sup>265</sup> See Wheeler’s article (2005) for a good description of the musical components of early rumba and his interpretation of their social implications.

<sup>266</sup> Kazadi wa Mukuna (1992: 80) provides a more developed version of this three part structure, breaking it down to include the instrumental prelude, a verse, instrumental interlude, a repeated verse, a call and response refrain, the *sebene*, and a return to the call and response refrain. Wheeler (

<sup>267</sup> Fargion 2004: 4 Track 17 on this album, *Dundumbanza* by Arsenio Rodriguez y su Conjunto is an example of a *son montuno* marketed to Africa on the GV label. See Kenis (2006) for another suggestion of a link to the *son montuno* form in Congolese music.

Cuban rhythm lines and sax or clarinet influence', in the 'Africanization' of Cuban melody lines and most distinctively the playing of Cuban brass parts on the guitar. He admits that this 'idiosyncratic' guitar style was 'derived partly from local techniques' (ibid). Generally Storm Roberts, along with Kazadi we Mukuna and Wheeler (2005), perceives Congolese music to have become increasingly distinct after the mid-1960s.

Of all these Latin forms Cuban *son* was the most enduring influence although *Rumba Congolaise* became the generic term Congolese people use about the music from this time. Latin music, especially Cuban, felt more African than it did European. Charged with all its modern and cosmopolitan associations it provided a ready made urban hybrid of African and European elements, the perfect syncretic ingredients for a new African popular music. With its developed orchestral vocal and instrumental arrangements it provided part of the template for the drive towards musical modernity as independence dawned in Brazzaville and Leopoldville. This was not Africa as a place of timeless ethnic 'tradition', the vision projected by the colonists upon their subjects, or of *évolués* attempting to become *mundele ndombe* (Europeans with black skins) but represented the possibility of developing a way of being an urban African, at least in this sphere, that was not defined by Europeans.<sup>268</sup>

Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa had the music industry and distribution networks. They had modern hybrid African music by the 1930s. But was it the right hybrid for diffusion? Military brass bands, Ballroom music, African American minstrelsy and

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<sup>268</sup> See Ndaywel è Nziem 1998: 451-455 on the the *évolués*.

spirituals and most influential of all in South Africa American jazz were the elements. By the 1950s jazz was no longer the international force it had been in the 1930s. The Latin craze and then Rock and Roll gripped Europe and America. Jazz no longer held the fashionable high ground. In the US its form was changing, becoming more cerebral and less dance oriented compared with the floor filling work of the 1930s. So although the Congolese had heard jazz and used the word for the names of their bands, as did bands all over West Africa, it was not the first music of choice in the face of the Latin explosion in the evolution of a local urban sound. South Africa, Ghana and Nigeria continued to look to North America in subsequent years. Ghana looked to the Latin rock of Santana and rock more generally. The Afro-rock group Osibisa achieved fame in Europe, but it was limited in Africa. More recently reggae has taken hold in Ghana. Nigeria's most famous musical export, Afrobeat, arrived in the 1970s when Fela Kuti fused the new sounds of American funk and jazz with Nigerian vocals and beats. But none of these influences from the USA have given these musical forms a truly Pan-African appeal on a par with *Rumba Congolaise*. Congolese music was popular in countries like Mali, Guinea, Senegal and Tanzania, where Latin music was the diaspora music of choice for fusion with local elements in the 1950s and 1960s. In some, like Kenya and Uganda, the popularity of Congolese music almost eclipsed that of local popular music. In others, like Guinea, it helped inspire it, as Sékou Touré had hoped. Any such generalisation is likely to founder if taken as a rule. Congolese music remains popular in Nigeria for instance. The pre-independence popularity of Latin music rather than jazz in any particular country is not a necessary condition for the popularity of Congolese music though it appears to have contributed to it. Latin

music didn't hit Zambia, Malawi or Zimbabwe in a big way and in all three Congolese music has been popular and influential. In the case of Zimbabwe there was even a strong jazz scene in the 1950s, especially in Bulawayo.<sup>269</sup>

Congolese musicians express the view that making music that is both modern and authentic is not just possible. It is crucial to their success. Part of being modern that played an important role in the development of the music at home was the love song as the most common theme of compositions (Ewens 1994:263; Stewart 26-29; White 1999; Biaya 1996; Tchewwa 1996: 262-267 and 296-299; Wheeler 2005). Though this cannot have been as important for the spread of the music to the rest of Africa where Lingala was not spoken the names of women often featured prominently and obviously in the songs of the men that dominated the music scene. Being modern musically, especially in the 1950s, appears to have become associated with Latin music, particularly the instrumental line up. In turn this appears to have been connected with its international appeal, another facet of how 'the modern' was conceived. In the 1950s this version of modernity had a strongly African face, the face of the diaspora in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was the descendants of African slaves who were closely identified with this most recent expression of modernity, many millions of whom, the Congolese were well aware, had come from their homeland. This identification was however not exclusively African because the music of Latin America though so familiar to the Congolese in many ways, as it was for many other Africans, was performed in an unfamiliar tongue – Spanish. This combination appears to have added to its initial cosmopolitan appeal.

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<sup>269</sup> On the influence of blues, minstrelsy, vaudeville and jazz between 1910 and 1965 in Zimbabwe see Williams, L. (1997: 291-8). See Collins (1987: 176-193) on the general influence of jazz and other African American and Latin American forms in Africa.

So this was not quite modernity with an adequately African face because the face was still singing in a European tongue. The Congolese learnt many Spanish songs by rote. This was a job Tabu Ley, one of the three main leaders of the second generation, gave to Sam Mangwana, because he thought Mangwana, with his knowledge of Portuguese coming from Angola, would make a good job of it and he did.<sup>270</sup> As the voices calling for national independence grew louder in the 1950s Spanish would not do. The cry for self determination had to be sung in a national language and Lingala provided that language in the Belgian Congo. The Latin tinge provided the diasporic, modern and cosmopolitan hue to the national Lingala song of celebration – Kabesele’s *Independence Cha Cha Cha* - a song that was to strike a chord with those that had already achieved independence like Guinea and those like Angola still struggling to that end.

Upon achieving independence the two cultural rivers, the diasporic musical forces of the Americas and the Caribbean and the national ‘folklorique’ resources of Congo’s hundreds of language groups, flowed into each other in ever-deeper ways. This was how one could be modern and authentic, an urban cosmopolitan and a rural communitarian African. The Congolese have claimed the word modern for themselves, and for those who were taken into bondage across the Atlantic, by putting it in a powerful alliance with the word authentic, a word with more active resonances than ‘traditional’. The task of freeing African minds from the bondage of a colonial mentality was a delicate task requiring sharp tools. This was the task

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<sup>270</sup> Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04.

Congolese musicians took to with such relish and such success. It was Africa's history and culture that had been tortured and disfigured by the slave trade and colonial subjugation. It was Africa that would have to make its own present, its own version of being modern, and its own self-image to heal the disfigured image bequeathed by the colonists. That image was one in which a distinctively African modernity was denied. Modernity had a Euro-American face making its pursuit appear little more than a form of mimicry. Africans had been infantilised, denied the right to change or fashion their own societies. When Mobutu declared his own version of Sékou Touré's policy of authenticity in the early 1970s, the urban music rooted itself deeper in the musical heritage of the Congolese people. But it never lost its modernity, its cosmopolitan cutting edge. They gave many of the new nationalist leaders what they wanted with their fast evolving integration of the modern urban African with a grounded rootsy edge. It was these leaders who invited Kabasele, Bombenga, Franco and Tabu Ley to come and play in their stadiums in the course of the 1960s. In Kenya and Tanzania it was not Kenyatta and Nyerere though who were to invite the Congolese at first. It was their people that clamoured for them in the nightclubs and it was the Congolese musical émigrés that came to perform for them as well as the Kenya African National Union (KANU) and the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU).

Wuta Mayi suggested the timing of that development at the dawn of independence was important and that no other African country made such a good job of reappropriating Latin music so early on.<sup>271</sup> The coincidence of the popularity of

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<sup>271</sup> Interviewed in England: 06/03/04

Congolese music with that of Latin music in Africa is fairly close. French West and Central Africa fell under the spell of Latin music, as did Anglophone and Lusophone East Africa after World War Two. Latin American music was by no means the only influence that went into the musical melting pot that spawned the Congolese sound. What comes across clearly in the following interview though is the perception that Latin music in the 1950s was seen as peculiarly modern and this was the strongest reason for its incorporation by Congolese musicians and Greek entrepreneurs alike. In New York Latino immigrants played the music. In London and Paris European bands were learning their Latin cover versions to pack out the nightclubs. Notice how frequently the modern and the Latin are equated with each other in this interview.

**Mangwana** - Let me tell you in the 1950s to start out as a guitarist you would have to play *La petit fleur* by Sidney Bechet and then before the concert begins all the Congolese Orchestras would begin with some jazz. Some might interpret Wes Montgomery, Django Reinhardt, the trumpeter Louis Armstrong, the saxophonist Charlie Parker – it was fabulous. Modern Congolese music what's that? It's these Greeks and Israelis who brought records to Franco and said 'go on, this South American, you have to play like that'. They brought records to them so they could make adaptations of them.

- *Because they thought if the music was more Latin influenced it would sell better?*

**Mangwana** – It's not that it's because they wanted their musicians to play good music, modern music. The Greeks had a feeling for this Latin music, and not just Cuban. You know OK Jazz also recorded Tangos. When I say South America, I don't just mean Cuba. For us South America is the beguine from the French Antilles, calypso from Jamaica, rumba from Venezuela, Columbia and Cuba, *meringue* that comes from St. Dominica – that's how we take it – not just Cuba. Highlife brought us a lot. The people from the Gold Coast travelled down to Matadi and it's there that Oliviera's group developed. They came from Angola with their traditional music, and then as they grew up in Matadi they picked up on the cadence of highlife. The group was called San Salvador and they learnt to play that style.

*- But then even a musician like Prince Nico from Nigeria with his song Sweet Mother and with such a rich country still didn't make Highlife as popular as Congolese music for long.*

**Mangwana** - Well what was *Sweet Mother*? It was the beat from this region of Biafra, the Igbo people, their way of folk dancing. The musicians over there wanted to modernise that. But it was totally different from the Yoruba music with Juju. So the Ibo defended their side and the Yoruba defended theirs. Voila. Congolese music wasn't too identified with one ethnic group because it modernised too quickly. Then there was the influence of the producers. I remember Bowane told me they will say 'that one's good, that



one's good, that's no good – in the dustbin'. At OPIKA, Monsieur Benatar went and hired a musician from Rhodesia, Musekiwa, because he wanted to include the jazz sound in Kabasele's band. (Interviewed in Glasgow 27/10/04)

We have the hard facts of colonial power relations in the studios jostling with the post colonial struggle to create a new African self image using some of the cultural resources that according to Mangwana were imposed as much chosen by the musicians. Who was responsible for introducing these diasporic Latin and Jazz elements back into the African pot matters little. The sweet taste of the soul food the musicians cooked up by using them is what mattered to the people.

## Part II

### Chapter Six: The Congolese Diaspora

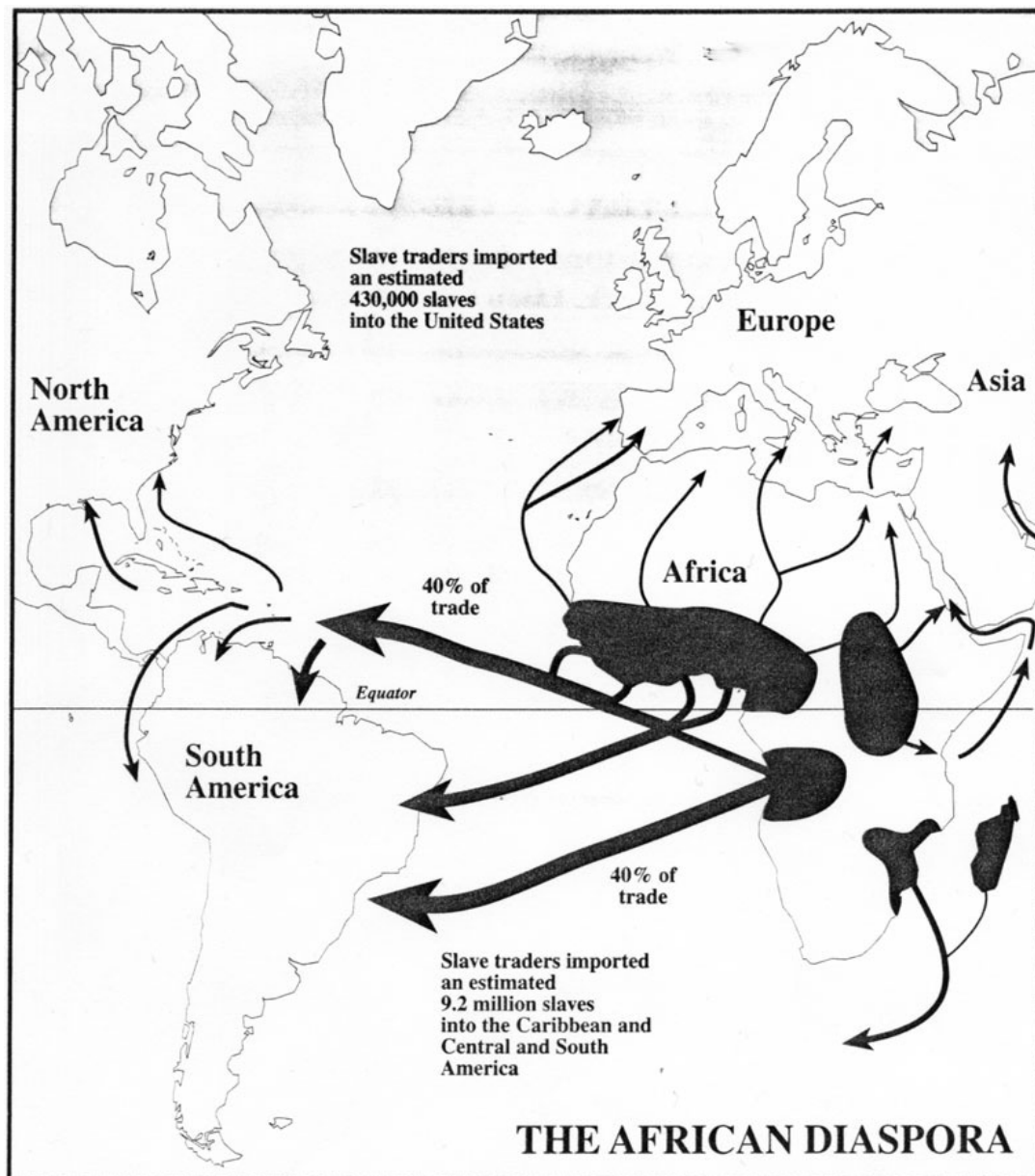
The diaspora of the Congolese within Africa has not received academic attention. By contrast an interest in the Congolese presence in Europe and the relationship between the Occidental diaspora and Congolese self perceptions has produced interesting and notable work the quantity of which has increased with the recent rise in the popularity of diaspora studies. MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000) have looked closely at the commercial dimension of the diaspora and Gandoulou (1989) has made a study of the cultural dimensions especially in the history of the *sapeurs* movement. Similarly in the case of Sahelian migrants there has been remarkable work on their presence in New York by Paul Stoller (2002). More generally the interest in the African diaspora has produced interesting work out of Europe (Back 1996; Gilroy 1987,1993 and 2000; Hall 1991; Solomos 1989), the Caribbean<sup>272</sup> and North America.<sup>273</sup> There has been less from Brazil despite the fact that approximately four million Africans were transported there as slaves and far fewer, one million, to North America (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton J.

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<sup>272</sup> For how the African diaspora has had a profound impact on Latin American music and culture there is a wealth of literature. See Yanow (2000: 2); Raul A. Fernandez (2006) especially the preface on the integration of African and European influences in Latin music; See Storm Roberts (1999: 13,118, 123, 204); Leymarie (2001); Salazar (2003); Moore (1997); Manuel *et al* (1995).

<sup>273</sup> For a lengthy bibliography on Diasporic studies that includes the North American material see Robin Cohen *Diasporas and Transnational Communities; A Bibliographical and Study Guide* ESRC Oxford online: [www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/wwwroot/bibliog.htm](http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/wwwroot/bibliog.htm) For a general works on the African diasporas see Harris (1993) and Harris (et al.) (1996); Okpewho, Davies and Mazrui. (1999). For an article on the genealogy of the terms usage see Baumann (2000) 'Diaspora: Genealogies of Semantics and Transcultural Comparison'

1999: 293). There has been an explosion of writing on the subject of diaspora at a theoretical level and on the African diaspora outside Africa specifically.<sup>274</sup>



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What then does this work have to offer in analysing the intra-African diaspora of Congolese musicians and the spread of their music? The preceding discussion of the

<sup>274</sup> See for instance Baubock 'Political Community Beyond the Sovereign State, Supranational Federalism, and Trans-national Minorities', in Vertovec (2002); Robin Cohen (2000). 'Rethinking the African Diaspora' and Robin Cohen (1997) *Global Diasporas: An introduction*; Hall (1990). 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora'; Koser (2003) 'New African Diasporas: An Introduction'; Westwood, S. and Phizacklea, A. (2000) *Trans-nationalism and the Politics of Belonging*.

<sup>275</sup> Map taken from Finkelman and Miller (1998: xlvii)

development and spread of Congolese music has had to shuffle between the Congolese capital, the Congolese nation and the Congolese abroad within Africa to get to grips with this spread. In this chapter three issues will be addressed. First what the pan-African success of Congolese music has contributed to the national identity or self-perceptions of the Congolese as Congolese abroad. Secondly how this identity is not the subject of the sort of defensive introspection that is forced on Africans outside Africa who experience intense racism in white dominated societies and where 'race' and racism are consequently central theoretical concerns of those interested in diaspora. Thirdly how the significance of the attraction within Africa of cosmopolitanism is as much about the black Atlantic (James Brown) as it is the white Atlantic (Johnny Hallyday).

Amongst those writing about diaspora and cosmopolitanism with a first generation African heritage Anthony Kwame Appiah has been particularly important. Like most of the writers Appiah draws his insights from the relationship between his African heritage and his experiences away from Africa, in his case in the USA. However theory about diaspora in the West, as well as cosmopolitanism and its relationship to the nation and nationalism, may still be applied cautiously within Africa. Turning then to a brief foray into the meaning of cosmopolitanism in the USA Appiah makes Nairn's (1997) distinction between civic and the ethnic nationalism central to his position. Appiah prefers to use the words political and cultural nationalism.<sup>276</sup> Hollinger (1999) provides a critique of Appiah's (1998)

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<sup>276</sup> See Thomas (2002) for more on the roots in Kohn's post World War Two writing of a dichotomous view of nationalism. Thomas attempts to provide an alternative to this binary model with an analytical schema based on five plausible and existing basis of nationalism and citizenship; as something one 'is' through common descent, as something one 'becomes' through socialization into a

attempt to solidify the conceptual distinction between a ‘national culture’ and ‘political culture’ in the United States.<sup>277</sup> This critique is not motivated by an opposition to Appiah’s goal in making this distinction – which is to theorise the basis for a patriotism to the political nation amongst the varied cosmopolitans, or, as Hollinger puts it, distinct ‘communities of descent’, within the United States. Appiah sees the development of a US ‘national culture’ as inherently exclusionary. He sees such a ‘national culture’ as a force that closes down the space for someone like himself to be patriotic in the United States. By contrast he sees the ‘political culture’ of the USA, at least that embodied in the liberal political nation, as an open space within which he can be comfortable with his Ghanaian heritage, while still being a patriotic US citizen – a cosmopolitan patriot. The critique that is provided by Hollinger of this position is that it is largely ahistorical. The liberal political nation in the United States is born of its own ‘community of descent’, an historical narrative of war and struggle. The extermination of the indigenous population, the war of independence, the civil war, the struggle for the abolition of slavery, two world wars and the civil rights movement all provide the narrative material of a national culture as well as the forces that have fashioned and brought into being the political nation. Hollinger claims that the political and cultural are not so distinct and both contribute to a national story that can generate a sense of belonging and consenting affiliation without precluding the inclusion of a man like Appiah in the political nation. In effect Hollinger is arguing that Appiah’s celebration of an inclusive national polity

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common culture and birthplace, as something one commits to and believes in terms of common political practices, as a set of social duties one agrees to in return for a set of rights one thereby becomes entitled to mostly but not exclusively mediated by the state, and lastly a strictly economic version of such a contract in the form of taxation one gives in return for services. See Davidson (1999) for a Marxist critique of Nairn’s view of nationalism and of his abandonment of the socialist internationalist project.

<sup>277</sup> It is this distinction which provides the theoretical and political basis for Appiah’s conception of the ‘cosmopolitan patriot’.

and denunciation of an excluding national culture removes the national narrative that glues the political and cultural together and provides a sense of belonging that is central to being American. This, he says, is a story that does not necessarily imply the exclusion of immigrants from other nations. Hollinger argues that there is room within this American national historical narrative, even though it has a cultural dimension, for many and often contesting voices. It is this very narrative that has produced the liberal political nation within which those divergent contesting voices and varied communities of descent can and do co-exist in spite of the dangers of conflict and violence they generate. This kind of debate could just as well relate to the relationship of the political, the cultural and the historical in the formation of any nationalism like that of the Congolese.

When we think about these analytic distinctions in relation to the Congolese what is fascinating is how it is the cultural elements that have provided the basis of a positive Congolese nationalism and the historic bedrock of national self imagining, created paradoxically during a period when the Congolese state went rotten and collapsed. It is in fact precisely the cultural nation, which has come into being in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which has brought together the linguistically, ethnically, regionally, politically and economically divided people of the country. The civic or political nationalism of which Appiah speaks is a distant dream in the DRC, overlaid as it is by forty-six years of kleptocracy, secessionist aspirations and scores of competing political parties. The dream of a united civic or political nation is still kept alive by the likes of Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002) and even an historian like Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem (1998) but in the absence of a believable civic nation it has been the cultural

nation that stands out as the believable and positive heart of the Congolese nation for those at home and even more for those in diaspora. It provides them with a way of being Congolese that is strong and distinctive. Musicians and fans all over the country have invented a common musical, stylistic and linguistic form and a shared narrative about the history of that form that they take with them when they leave. It provides them with the cultural materials with which to establish spaces to experience and express that form wherever they go. This is a cultural nation that has proved attractive enough as unifying focus of identity to draw together the huge diversity of the population of the DRC in a way that has not proved exclusionary of one ethnic or even national group in the way Appiah sees the cultural nation as doing. The dominance of Lingala in popular song has not produced the violent reaction from people, especially those who speak the other 'national' languages Kikongo, KiSwahili and TshiLuba, which might have been expected of those who identify with them as their first language. The speakers of these other languages have acquired Lingala for the purposes of reaching the whole nation in the way already described. This was a question I frequently put to Swahili speakers from Eastern Congo. Although some expressed regret at the decline of Swahili popular song with the rise of Lingala this was tempered by a fierce sense of being involved in a truly national project in the development of their popular music. Even at the level of nationality rather than ethnicity the Congolese cultural nation has for instance included Sam Mangwana, of Angolan parents, as a central character in Congolese music history. Franco took on Rhodesian sax player Isaac Musikewa in 1957 and Nigerian sax player Dele Pedro in 1964 as permanent fixtures in OK Jazz.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Mangwana did complain of being denied authorisation to form his own band by the authorities as a foreigner and of an attack on him by a fellow musician in the Congolese press for being a foreigner in

Congo Kinshasa is also an historical nation, drawn together, as Hollinger describes in a similar way in the United States, by a shared narrative of pain and conflict. In the DRC there was a completely different political and economic background and outcome to decolonisation and the end of oppression under the Belgians to that in the United States, where of course it was the colonists who declared independence from the mother country two centuries earlier and took the land from the local population after slaughtering them. In Zaire independence led to oppression and dictatorship after Mobutu's accession to power in 1965, rather than anything resembling democracy. Since Mobutu's demise this collective national experience has become even more traumatic, as war and mass civilian deaths have followed state collapse and hyperinflation. This experience of war, though traumatic and negative, has not been as fragmentary for Congolese self-perceptions as might be expected. In the perception of most Congolese it has not been a civil war between East and West but war brought to the DRC by malevolent nations fighting their own battles on Congolese soil and stealing its resources with the connivance of the West.

In contrast to this still unitary, but largely negative national self-perception, is the positive self-perception provided by the cultural nation, especially for those Congolese that have migrated. It has been the cultural nation that embodies a form of self-expression worthy of celebration for those in diaspora. This is the cohesive nation expressed in music, language and style. This cultural nation has been forged

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1976. So the state was exclusionary at this level and an individual expressed an exclusionary nationalist sentiment. On the other hand Mangwana was keen to describe how inclusive Franco was of non-Congolese nationals. Some Congolese musicians pointed out that Mangwana has retained his loyalty to Angola. Either way it has not been in the cultural but the political nation that Mangwana found himself feeling marginalised.



while the political and civic nation decayed in the hands of Mobutu and is now tortured at the hands of the armies of their neighbours and their Congolese proxies.<sup>279</sup> While the warring parties of the inter-Congolese dialogue trade insults, tiny political parties multiply, Joseph Kabila wins an election of sorts and the main opposition candidate, Jean-Pierre Bemba, goes into exile, as so many politicians out of power have before, the country still resonates to the sound of Werra Son. Werra Son may have had his club at Zamba Playa attacked and his band's instruments destroyed by a Kinshasa mob angry because of his support for Kabila in 2006, but his music still fills the airwaves in Congo and the dance floors and restaurants where the migrant Congolese congregate.<sup>280</sup> This cultural glue, of music and language, is in part Mobutu's legacy, as already discussed. It was he who promoted the use of Lingala and sponsored urban dance bands, while encouraging their creativity in turning to the national musical heritage for inspiration during the era of *authenticité*. This is a legacy strangely similar to that of his archenemy Nyerere. Nyerere left the opposite legacy to Mobutu in terms of the viability of the civic and political nation, not to mention economic. The other crucial difference with Nyerere is that Mobutu, while making political use of his musicians in the formation of his personality cult, also encouraged their entrepreneurialism. Nyerere harnessed his popular urban dance bands directly to the state by making them state employees. While the Congolese economy went into freefall in the 1980s and 1990s, the musicians had the motivation

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<sup>279</sup> Though football has developed alongside popular music the Congolese have not had the same success in this field as they have musically. See Goldblatt (2006: 506-510) on the brief triumph and ultimate shame of the Zairian national team, the Leopards. They won the African Champions cup in 1968 and 1974 but were then beaten in the World Cup 9-0 by Yugoslavia in 1974. Mobutu subsequently abandoned his populist flirtation with football.

<sup>280</sup> For more on the byzantine complexities of recent Congolese politics the BBC website is a reasonable starting point. For more the Economist Intelligence Unit reports attempt to summarise developments. Congolese websites and agencies concerned with democratisation can be found at: <<http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/zaire.html>>. For the attack on Werra Son's nightclub July 2006 see: [www.electioncongo.com](http://www.electioncongo.com)

and skills to ply their trade elsewhere. We will come to the contrast between Mobutu and Nyerere's sponsorship and Kenyatta's total neglect of popular urban dance bands. Kenyatta did however follow Mobutu's lead in making use of massed choirs and dance troupes to build his personality cult, as did his successor Moi (Masolo 2000).

Those who have written about the diaspora of the Congolese have been interested, like the writers already mentioned, in the relationship to Europe, America, Latin America and Japan rather than with the rest of Africa. They have focused on how these places have provided the materials for mixing with the cultural heritage of the Congo and the way in which these wealthy countries have stood as places to escape to from the impossibility of life at home. The West has been the focus of aspirational hopes of a better life through migration or of wealth through trading just as it is for so many people all over Africa and Asia. One dimension of this aspiration has been the subject of in depth research by Gandoulou (1989a and 1989b). This is the Congolese cult of elegance, the *sapeurs* of the 1980s and 1990s. Gandoulou looks at how the cult was intertwined with the status of those who overcome the obstacles in the way of making it to Europe and the use to which clothes acquired in Europe are put on returning home in the fashion and status competitions of the young Brazzavilleois. The work of MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000) deals primarily with the difficulties and strategies of the Congolese in Europe where economic opportunities on the margins of the law exist but the environment is socially and politically hostile. The work of Gondola (1996) continues the work of

Gandoulou in exploring the way Kinois and Brazzavilleois identities are constituted in part by their relationship to Europe through migration.

We can now turn to the second and third issues, concerning the focus of Western diaspora studies on racism and cosmopolitanism. The absence of an interest in diaspora within Africa may be due to the fact that in the twentieth century population movements do not have their origins so clearly in the momentous violence of the slave trade. It should be remembered this is the case for much of the population movement in Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Secondly population movements within Africa in the twentieth century have not been between countries on either side of the most radical economic and military inequalities that exist between Africa and Euro-America. Diasporas within Africa, at least in the twentieth century, have not as a whole produced the kind of social tensions and violence that have characterised the history of the diaspora outside Africa where the legacy of slavery is still such a heavy burden. By contrast South Africa appears to be reproducing some of the same violent and exclusionary dynamics towards West and Central African migrants that are to be found in Europe and America. This goes some way to explaining why there is now a sizeable literature on the subject in South Africa compared to any other African country to which there have been comparable population movements.<sup>281</sup> As in Europe and America there are substantial economic disparities between South Africa and the countries from which the migrants from elsewhere in Africa come. The very absence of any significant problem for Congolese migrants in countries like Kenya and Tanzania, indeed the opposite when

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<sup>281</sup> See Part IV.

it comes to the welcome accorded Congolese musicians, makes the subject interesting. There are important exceptions where the ethnicity and nationality of immigrants have become part of a violent and exclusionary politics in Africa. Rwandans and Burundians in Eastern Congo are one example. Malians and Burkinabé in the Ivory Coast have become enmeshed in a violent politics of citizenship and exclusion. Africa's absence from work on diaspora is something that has been highlighted by Piot (2001) in his critique of Gilroy's seminal *Black Atlantic* (1993).

A surprising blind spot in Gilroy's work, as well as in that of many recent scholars of the African diaspora, lies in his treatment of Africa. In *The Black Atlantic*, the focus of transatlantic exchange and connection is largely on the Caribbean, the United States, and Britain.... In this essay, I attempt to return Africa to the diaspora. But I aim to do so not by characterizing it, as an earlier diaspora literature long did, as a site of origin and symbolic return but rather by seeing Africa as itself diasporic—as derivative of the Atlantic slave system and made and remade by its encounter with modernity. Imagining the diaspora as prior to the homeland might also enable us to read the black Atlantic and theories of identity developed by diaspora scholars like Gilroy and Hall back into the cultures of the mainland. (Piot 2001: 155-6)

The evidence Piot uses to make his case comes from Togo. Here the slave trade has been the most formative historical influence on the subsequent evolution of population movements and the ethnic tensions between North and South Togolese.

Piot goes on to demonstrate the ways in which influences in more recent times from African American culture are integrated in Togolese cultural life, for instance in the initiation ceremonies of the Northern Togolese. By focusing on these two themes – the momentous influence of the slave trade on the history of population movements and the associated ethnic politics this has given rise to on the one hand and the creative *bricolage* of indigenous and diasporic cultural elements on the other - Piot attempts to demonstrate how Africa itself should be included in the kind of analysis Gilroy has conducted around the rest of the Atlantic in which these two themes are also central. It should be noted that in Piot's Togolese example ethnicity replaces the role 'race' plays in Gilroy's work as the axis for the violent legacy of the slave trade. In the Togolese example this ethnic axis has evolved between the former slave raiders from the coast in the South (Ewe) and those who were raided in the North (Kabre).

Though the evolution of Congolese music can be seen in a similar light as far as the mixing of local and diasporic elements is concerned the diaspora of Congolese musicians itself is not directly the product of the slave trade. When the Congolese have emigrated within Africa it has not been accompanied as a consequence with the attendant conflicts and legacy of bitterness that characterises the relationship between those Africans who raided for slaves and those that were raided. Piot describes how the Northern Togolese reorganised their societies to evade and manage raiding from the South through dispersal and tribute payment of slaves. The features of a modernity fashioned by the history of slavery and survival strategies in response to that trauma rooted in a creative hybridity common to both Africa and the

countries to which Africans have moved, whether forcibly or otherwise, that Piot demonstrates so ably in the case of Togo, do not appear quite so salient when the Congolese as a minority group are welcomed elsewhere in Africa and attain a culturally privileged status through their music. Unlike the Africans in the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe their presence and status do not have their roots directly in the history of slavery. Nor are they part of the kind of history of social tensions rooted in the history of slavery Piot describes in Togo. Though they form tiny minorities in East Africa they are not marginalised or excluded by the majority society into which they have moved. Indeed since independence quite the opposite. An important part of the explanation of their success in achieving this status does relate back to the history of the African diaspora though. It is precisely the skill and self confidence with which the Congolese mixed Congolese, diasporic and European elements in their music, fashion and showmanship to create a way of being modern that was African that proved so appealing to other Africans and their leaders after independence in the rest of the continent. In this they do appear to have something in common with descendants of Africans in the West.

...in the critical thought of blacks in the West, social self-creation through labour is not the center-piece of emancipatory hopes. For the descendants of slaves work signifies only servitude, misery and subordination. Artistic expression... therefore becomes the means towards both individual self-fashioning and communal liberation. (Paul Gilroy 1993: 40)

The twentieth century diaspora of the Congolese within Africa, may well be related to the break down of the economy and civil war and thereby indirectly to the negative aftermath of slavery and colonisation that preceded decolonisation. That said the spread of the music has more diffuse origins that are related to more general processes that come under the rubric of globalisation, of which diaspora is one constituent. Appadurai has attempted to produce a language with which to analyse globalisation (Appadurai 2003: 35). Appadurai is at pains to foreground the extent to which global power relations structured by the historical interaction of capitalism and imperialism remain critical to the nature of globalisation. He uses the metaphor of landscapes grinding against each other to render the ruptures within this globalisation process. The five landscapes he distinguishes are the mediascape, ideoscape, technoscape, financescape and ethnoscape. The idea of the ethnoscape is the one that relates most closely to our concern here with diaspora. In this Appadurai is using the distinction between the globalisation of various technological and economic forces, like television and finance capital, and the movement across the globe of ethnic or national groups, groups which previously remained more geographically stable. The diaspora of Congolese people is part of this more general process in which ethnicity and nationality are being stretched across space as more and more people from all over the world leave their villages and towns and travel further and further in the search of security and economic opportunities. Economic opportunities are a bland way of describing what can often mean the difference between life and death. The way in which the Congolese retain and even strengthen their sense of what it means to be Congolese in the process of building up a diasporic community, is something that is very different from the experience of those in the

Americas forced to leave Africa in the course of the slave trade or subsequently migrating to Europe from the Caribbean looking for work.

The plethora of writing that springs from the experience of Africans and Asians in the West is not necessarily the best starting point for understanding the post colonial experience of diaspora within Africa. This is because the experience of social exclusion and racism has made a concern with identity and cultural identity in particular central to that writing even when, in the manner of Stuart Hall, it has been to question the notion of cultural identity - at least as something fixed and stable (Hall 1990: 222-226). How a concern with identity has come to be so central to writing on diaspora in Euro-American cultural studies is occasionally questioned even as it is explained. For instance Radhakrishan (2003: 119-131) and Ifekwunigwe (2003: 197) grapple with the way in which a focus on black and black hyphenated identities (Asian-American, Black-British etc.) has its origins in the experience of racism and exclusion from the dominant national identity when that identity has been coded as white. The African diaspora to nations in which whiteness is central to national self-perceptions tend to make experiences of racism and exclusion definitive of the experience of diaspora. As Radhakrishan indicates much of the focus on the authenticity or valorisation of one's identity is a reactive and defensive response to deal with this exclusion in Europe and North America. His question is whether such a focus would ever develop in the absence of such exclusion thus demonstrating that such a focus is not somehow given or natural but the consequence of being excluded, oppressed, dominated and so on.



Would “black” have to be authentic if it were not pressured into a reactive mode by the dominance of “white”? It becomes difficult to determine if the drive toward authenticity comes from within the group as a spontaneous self-affirming act, or if authenticity is nothing but a paranoid reaction to the “naturalness” of dominant groups. Why should “black” be authentic when “white” is hardly even seen as a color, let alone pressured to demonstrate its authenticity?...Let us ask the following question: If a minority group were left in peace with itself and not dominated or forced into a relationship with the dominant world or national order, would the group still find the term “authentic” meaningful or necessary? (Radhakrishnan 2003:127)

The security in those elements of identity that gives dominant groups their naturalness and relative lack of political or intellectual interest in those elements of identity derives from the position of economic and political control membership of those groups gives rise to. This is because in practical terms those groups, say ‘white’ people, define the social and institutional processes of inclusion and exclusion, for instance in getting jobs, housing and citizenship. This control means those elements of one’s social make-up that connect to power, like whiteness, remain unproblematic because personally advantageous. The same can be said of other elements of one’s social make-up other than perceived phenotype, say middle classness and maleness. Those elements that relate to being excluded, like being perceived as black, become problematic because disadvantageous in racist white dominated societies and so are likely to become the subject of introspection about their meaning as part of one’s identity as well as the focus of political action to

reverse the negative impact of being excluded. So given that in most of Sub Saharan Africa Congolese musicians have been welcomed and adulated for the ‘Congolese ness’ of their music it is not that surprising that their nationality has not become the focus of worries about their identity. The importance of this is that the experience of diaspora is by no means exclusive to those groups who come to be excluded in the places to which they move. Indeed in the case of the colonial diasporas from Europe to the Americas and Australasia those migrants who form the European diasporic community are now the dominant groups. By 1915 around one third or around 14 million of the 44 million migrants from Europe to the United States came from Great Britain and Ireland, far more than from any other single nation. Only about one million slaves came from the whole of Africa during the entire history of the slave trade by comparison.<sup>282</sup> This is why the ‘English-Americans’ or ‘British-Americans’ are hardly self-identifying groups. They don’t need to be. Unfortunately for African-Americans they certainly do and not because of their lesser numbers.

Though Congolese-Tanzanians and Congolese-Kenyans are by no means powerful groups, and the musicians have occasionally been targeted by the state for work permit offences, they talk of being accepted and welcomed by the people and never having been attacked because of their nationality. They do not use these hyphenated identity markers either. So it is not even necessary to be part of the dominant group in society in order to avoid the need to authenticate one’s identity. Being accepted and having the expression of difference celebrated appears to be enough - at least in

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<sup>282</sup> This 1 million forms a small proportion of the total of 12 million slaves taken across the Atlantic from Africa to the Americas. Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton. (1999: 291-293). Herbe. S. Klein (1999:46) gives a figure of 500,000 for the total import of slaves to the United States from Africa.

this case – thus answering Radhakrishnan's question. The Congolese in Tanzania and Kenya can pick and chose, some keeping their nationality and sense of distinction, some gradually becoming Tanzanian or Kenyan and applying for citizenship. The state sets important constraints on this process but in the absence of national, ethnic or skin colour exclusion from social life, housing and jobs these dimensions to identity do not appear to become so salient a concern. As the Tanzanian government has gradually raised the cost of work permits in the last ten years nationality has become more salient to financial survival for Congolese musicians though. But it has not affected how the Congolese are accepted in social settings like bars and churches or for housing except in as much as it limits the capacity to pay the rent. This indicates that in studying the phenomena of diasporic communities and their experiences the centrality and nature or absence of identity politics is not in itself the effect of leaving home or being diasporic but of whether one has travelled by choice or compulsion and by how one is welcomed or rejected by, establish equality with or dominate the host community. The same Congolese music that has been a bridge for Congolese migrants into other African societies, where it has been welcomed, could be seen as a marker of a Congolese cultural ghetto in Europe.<sup>283</sup> In recent years in Europe Congolese stars of the fourth generation find themselves playing largely to Congolese audiences. They have lost a white European and American audience, as white Western 'world music' tastes demand less 'modernity' in the form of high technology and stadium showmanship, less cosmopolitan hybridity and more 'authenticity' and 'Africaness'. The fourth generation music continues to act as a positive force of identification whether as a bridge in Africa or of distinctiveness in a

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<sup>283</sup> See for instance the way Banning Eyre raises this question when interviewing Werra Son in 2002. (<http://www.afropop.org/multi/interview/ID/26/Werra%20Son:%20Kinshasa,%202002>)

ghetto in the West. It is interesting that the same music and style can play such completely different roles in the African and Western diasporas. Some Congolese musicians pursuing Western markets have recognised the nature of that market and re-formulated their music to cater for white Western tastes by recording Congolese music in the style of the 1960s (Kékelé and Sam Mangwana). This is a style that bears little relation to the existing music scene in Africa. Similarly since 2005 Congolese music with powerful and obvious rural and acoustic connections, in the form of the band Konono No. 1, has been taken from a marginal space in the cultural life of Kinshasa and successfully marketed in the West by Vincent Kenis.<sup>284</sup>

The rejection and exclusion of immigrants is not a European or white preserve it should be said. Take for instance the expulsion of ‘aliens’ from Ghana in 1969 and from Nigeria in 1983, of Ugandan Asians in the 1970s, the attacks on Rwandan descendants in Eastern Congo in the 1990s and on Malians in the Ivory Coast since 2000 (Cohen 1995: 166-171). In this light the xenophobia the recent wave of Congolese migrants to South Africa have experienced and the previous lack of either Congolese migrants or influential Congolese musicians is interesting both in terms of South Africa’s cultural distinctiveness from the rest of the region and what this has meant for the mutual perceptions of Congolese and South Africans. In this context I would like to attempt an extension of Paul Gilroy’s use of the idea of double consciousness. I am going to suggest the idea of a triple consciousness.

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<sup>284</sup> For the story of Vincent Kenis and Konono No. 1 go to: <http://www.crammed.be/konono/> For more on the social profile of British fans of ‘world music’, especially British fans who migrated from being fans of early American blues, like myself, see Frith (1985) in Wallis and Malm.

Consciousness plays somewhat differently from ‘identity’ with which it has much in common, because it implies the intellectual force one uses to think the world rather than some ‘thing’, however mutable, that you possess. The first form of consciousness is where being Congolese means being African in a specific and special form, thinking and dreaming the world in Lingala, Swahili or Kikongo and in the idioms of the Congolese. This form of consciousness, like the others, is of course multifaceted, shot through with locality, ethnicity, urbanity and so on. The second is the historical force of a European element in the formation ‘the Congolese’ and in the constitution of Congolese consciousness. That element came into being in the course of colonial rule and post-independence neo-colonialism. Europe also acts on Congolese consciousness as a solid geographic and heavenly place to escape to from the harsh realities of life at home. It is a place of dreams with names that conjure longing - *Lola*, *Miguel*, *Putu*, *Mikili* or *Zwenebele*.<sup>285</sup> The European often stands for a modernity that is felt partly as a model to be aspired to and partly as an external imposition of an impossible materialist value system worthy of resistance, one from which the Congolese have been excluded by those very same Europeans and their co-conspirator Mobutu Sese Seko. Europe is also a language though, the French language as a means of thinking the world, and a language experienced in the classrooms, on the airwaves and in the songs of the Belgians and French.<sup>286</sup> In this the Congolese differ from the Africans of the diaspora who have grown up with Euro-American modernity as their social environment and their versions of the

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<sup>285</sup> See De Boeck (2004: 45-50) on the struggle over the definition of modernity in Kinshasa and the ambivalent relationship with Europe. *lola* (heaven) and *Miguel* (a well know European called Miguel who will return one day).

<sup>286</sup> As noted earlier French and Belgian *variété* were an important constituent in the repertoire of Congolese bands for some years after independence. Johnny Halliday as well as James Brown had success performing to black audiences in Kinshasa in the 1970s. Jazz was filtered through Europe and white musicians like Bill Alexandre to the point where the word European often came before jazz at least in conversations with many of the older musicians.

European languages as their mother tongues. They have experienced exclusion within rather than from outside this world and so have developed their own counter-cultures. The return to Ethiopia for Jamaican Rastafarians or the creation of Liberia for black Americans have totally different meanings from the aspiration to escape Congo and make it to Belgium for the Congolese. The third is the diasporic level of consciousness, the consciousness of a connection with the cultures and counter cultures of those that have left the Congo basin over the last four hundred years whether as slaves or otherwise and now speak the black Spanish and Portuguese of Latin America or the English and French of black North America and the Caribbean.

This dimension of Congolese consciousness originates from the historical force of those cultures projected back across the Atlantic in the course of the twentieth century. This diasporic world also acts as an inspiration for a vision of an alternate modernity to that of Europe, an alternate African diasporic modernity, one to which the Congolese can and do lay claim, especially in the history of their popular music where the interplay of the diaporic and the Congolese is most evident. The place of the diasporic cultures of the black Atlantic in the lives and history of the Congolese plays a completely different role to that which Africa has played for those diasporic peoples. The most obvious reason for this is the marked difference in the extent to which those black Atlantic popular cultures of the Americas and Caribbean, especially music, have been marketed back to Africa and how little African popular culture, especially music, has flowed in the opposite direction by comparison in the twentieth century. This is not surprising given the earlier urbanisation of the Americas and the fact that music that originated in North America had the benefit of

the most powerful culture industries in the world for the international marketing of music, film and television. All the three forms of consciousness can be used to think the world, in an unstable dynamic tension with each other. Adding this third level may help us understand the complexity and distinctiveness of Congolese emigrants relationship with their new worlds when they leave home. Threes are harder to think than a binary opposition like Europe and Africa. Thinking in threes diminishes the risks though of the intellectual attraction the neatness a binary gives us. It may also help distinguish the differences as well as the commonalities in the popular culture of Africans like the Congolese in diaspora and the descendants of those taken in bondage under slavery around the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

## Chapter Seven: East Africa

### 7:1 Tanzania and Kenya

The overwhelming influence of Zairian music on East African pop is irrefutable.

(Stone 2000: 121)

There are interesting stories to be told in many countries to which Congolese music and musicians have travelled but a choice must be made in order to investigate how the general story told in previous chapters finds its particular expression. Let us now turn to the different cultural, political and economic circumstances of two particular countries in which Congolese music has proved popular – Kenya and Tanzania. The East African focus chosen here is not meant to be significant in itself. One of the reasons the Congolese diaspora is interesting is that it is Pan African and as such breaks through the cultural and political boundaries by which Africa has been academically and historically divided. For example if we turn to the foreword written by Terence Ranger (2000) to *Mashindano!*, a collection of pieces on East African music, it is noteworthy that the geographic border he drew around his research in the 1970s on the musical phenomenon of *Beni* ended at the Congolese border like the research represented in this book from the 1990s. In this he reflects the general tendency to divide Africa up musically into ethnic groups, nations and at best regions. Because amongst all the musical forms of Africa it is really only Congolese music that has had much of an impact in Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole it is not surprising that national perspectives on popular urban music have predominated in the academic literature. Reference works like *The Grove Dictionary of Music* (1999) and *The Rough Guide to World Music* (1999 and 2006) use the



nation state as the basic organisational category rather than genres, like African jazz, rumba or highlife, into which nation states could be fitted rather than the other way around. An academic focus driven by a concern with the national and the ethnic on the one hand and the global (most often meaning Occidental) on the other can lead to the disappearance in academic work of an African music in those places where it has crossed these national boundaries and has acted as a distinctive musical force in the cultural life of those nations to which it has travelled. This is understandable given how important national forms have been in the development of urban African music, in the Congos as elsewhere. Werner Graebner (1999), for instance, is keen to subsume and contain the Congolese musical presence in Tanzania within the orbit of an East African and national Tanzanian musical cultural history. Orchestre Maquis are one of the Congolese bands that held sway in Tanzania in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>287</sup>

In Tanzania foreign musicians are a lot more integrated into the local scene and they usually sing their songs in Swahili. For an outsider, the Maquis style (especially their vocal harmonies) may sound close to Kinshasa *soukous*, but it's really the other way around: the eastern parts of the Congo have always had closer cultural and economic ties to East Africa than to the Congo basin. (Graebner 1999: 684)

As we shall see this is certainly not the view of the Congolese musicians from Orchestre Maquis amongst others interviewed for this study. They see their music, and especially the more recent dance music of Tanzania that emulates the Wenge

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<sup>287</sup> For an example of the Orchestre Maquis style and the limited quality of the recordings produced by Radio Tanzania listen to the song *Makumbele* (CD 2 track 11).

generation, as springing from a pan-Congolese musical development that brought Eastern and Western Zaire together and that began before and has lasted ever since independence. Stone (2000: 121-122) writing about Africa as a whole is ready to recognise the steady flow of Congolese musical influence that began with the diffusion into East Africa and Rhodesia of the thumb-and-forefinger plucking technique developed by the Katangan guitarist Jean Bosco Mwenda in the 1950s. Roberts (1965) makes no mention of the Congolese in Kenya. Doug Paterson also writing about Kenya is probably the most forthright about the Congolese presence and influence amongst the academics that have made a particular nation their musical speciality (1999: 515-516). Writing in 1986 Paterson had this to say about the popularity of the Congolese in Kenya.

Yet, when compared to the overwhelming popularity of Zairians (in Kenya) such as Franco, Tabu Ley, Mbilia Bel, Quatre Étoiles...all their (Kenyan bands) efforts seem to have gone for naught. Kenyans have so far been unwilling to grant superstar status to any of their local number. Could it be a Kenyan version of the Groucho Marx quip, "I'd never join a club that would accept me as a member"? (Paterson 1986)

Since independence Kenya and Tanzania have provided a good contrast with each other despite their physical proximity. This contrast has been a popular subject of academic interest because on the face of it the contrast has chimed with the basic left right axis of Occidental politics, a polarity that, like the politics, has underpinned academic conflicts in the relevant disciplines (Barkan and Okumu (eds) 1979;

Mohiddin 1981; Barkan (ed.) 1994). Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya and Julius Nyerere in Tanzania provided commentators from the left and the right with champions of African capitalism and African socialism respectively after independence. Whatever the dissonance between political rhetoric and state practice in both cases, as well as the constraints common to all African economies, there are still some substantial differences in the policy's and history's of these two countries.<sup>288</sup> Those differences have been examined primarily in terms of the social and economic consequences of the contrast between the politics of Kenyatta and his successor Arap Moi in Kenya and of Julius Nyerere in Tanzania. But there is also a contrast in how popular culture has developed and the way in which Congolese musicians have interacted with the local music scene in the two countries. This dimension to the contrast has not received much academic attention.<sup>289</sup> The extent to which that contrast is the consequence of the state practices alluded to above, practices that could be understood to sit on a left right political spectrum, is central to what follows. Since independence in Tanzania there has been substantial state involvement with and patronage of national music, both rural and urban, and in part as a consequence there has been a strong Swahili and therefore national urban dance music that has evolved, while at the same time there has been very little development in the infrastructure of the music industry – most obviously no significant record production capacity. By contrast the Kenyan state, as in other areas of the economy, has left popular urban

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<sup>288</sup> Those constraints include much that is still a colonial legacy, an undiversified economic base with as a consequence a narrow tax base, despotic administrative forms, confused and competing customary and 'modern' law, a dependence on basic commodities, unstable commodity prices, direct foreign investment dependent on conformity to policy dictates of IMF/World Bank and so on. To these political and economic constraints are the geographic constraints, low rainfall in the Sahel region and disease in the tropics for instance. The formative influence of the constraints common to all African economies whatever their policy choices become clear when continental studies are conducted like that of Nugent (2004).

<sup>289</sup> The interest generated by the contrast in the two countries political economy noted above has not extended to include popular culture.

dance music largely to the vagaries of market forces.<sup>290</sup> What has resulted is that the Congolese and Tanzanians in Kenya have dominated the pan-ethnic national market in the post-independence era. On the other hand Kenya's encouragement of the private sector meant a recording industry continued to develop in Nairobi after independence that never came into being in Tanzania. In Tanzania records came from Kenya. Radio Tanzania took to regular recording of the plethora of state backed Tanzanian dance bands while boosting their transmission capacity, staffing levels and diffusion of portable radios following independence. People in Tanzania turned enthusiastically to the state broadcaster for their main source of recorded Tanzanian music. That is the basic contrast between the histories of the two countries since independence in the field of popular urban dance music. That said what is interesting for this study is the way in which in both countries Congolese musicians adapted to local circumstances to ply their trade. In Tanzania there has also been a strong and enduring Congolese presence in spite of the state patronage of Tanzanian bands.<sup>291</sup>

There is a second contrast between the trajectories Kenya and Tanzania have taken since independence that has also had an impact on popular music. This is the contrast in the policies and practices of the newly independent states in regard to the nation-building project, specifically in the areas of language policy and the practices of patrimonial politics based around ethnicity. This is a contrast that has received

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<sup>290</sup> See following sections specifically on Kenya and Tanzania for references.

<sup>291</sup> Since the inauguration of president Benjamin Mkapa in 1995 and the adoption of economic liberalisation policies the state has withdrawn its patronage from the majority of previously state sponsored dance bands but still remains an important actor in the field most notably in their relationship to Tanzania One Theatre (TOT) a subject to which we shall come. More generally liberalisation has been accompanied by the rise of Swahili Rap and Hip Hop and with the opening up of the airwaves and rise in the airtime given to international pop and *Taarab* music.

less attention than that between the extent of state control exercised over the functioning of the market and the consequent evolution of class formations. In the development of the Tanzanian nation, as in the functioning of the economy, Nyerere was far more proactive and interventionist than Kenyatta or Moi. Askew has focused on how the ruling party in Tanzania has manipulated and fashioned Tanzanian performance traditions to develop the Tanzanian sense of nationhood (Askew 2002). Nyerere and his party's success, in terms of their own goals, in fashioning a Tanzanian nation can be overlooked when focusing on the failures and corruption of the state regulated economy and the doomed *Ujamaa* villagisation programme (Hyden 1980, Patterson, S. 2004).<sup>292</sup> This success was achieved without the resources at the disposal of the nation states that took their modern form in Europe with the loot of empire and the tax resources that flowed from imperial commerce and industrialisation. Kenya on the surface may appear to have been equally successful in this department given the absence of ethnically motivated civil war since independence. An absence of civil strife is not necessarily evidence of a cohesive nation though. In what follows the contrast between the two countries in terms of the relationship between the ruling parties and ethnicity sits side by side with the contrast in their relationship to intervention in the functioning of the market. It is the interaction between these two factors, in what follows, that will be used to help account for the way it is Kenya, despite its functioning music industry, that succumbed more to the appeal of Congolese music and failed to produce the kind of local musical competition that developed in Tanzania. Although Congolese musicians in Tanzania argue that Tanzanian dance bands take their primary

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<sup>292</sup> This point is the principal theme of Sarah Elise Patterson's work.

inspiration and influence from the Congolese and merely add Swahili lyrics nonetheless they also recognise their competitiveness and mass appeal compared to those in Kenya. Though many fans agree, Tanzanian musicians usually disagree with this Congolese perception.

If the Congolese, and many Tanzanian fans are correct in their estimation of the extent of Congolese influence in Tanzanian music merely looking at the level of Congolese dominance in terms of the volume of record and cassette sales and its proportion of media airtime relative to that of domestic and other international music would be deceptive. It is still unfortunate that these figures are not available (Wallis and Malm 1992: 33). They are not available for broadcasting because Congolese bands resident and recording for Radio Tanzania were accepted in policy terms as sufficiently Tanzanian when Radio Tanzania implemented the party policy demanding singularly local content in the mid 1960s. Foreign music henceforth was only allowed on request and then it was not to exceed 30% as a proportion (Grosswiler 1998). Records were imported from Kenya, sometimes made from recordings pirated from Radio Tanzania's own broadcasts of Tanzanian bands. Once cassette piracy took off in the 1980s, even if such figures for official sales were available, they would have become meaningless as the bulk of production and distribution of the music quickly fell to an unregulated and artisanal part of the second economy with a whole range of actors duplicating and selling pirate cassettes. In 1994 Polydor Kenya, by this point the only formal sector producer, estimated that 90% of local cassette production was pirated.<sup>293</sup> Local record companies in Kenya

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<sup>293</sup> U.S. Department of State. Kenya Economic Policy and Trade Practices. 1994 Section. 7

like Ahadi folded in the 1980s. The majors departed and the Kenyan record factories began to close by the late 1980s after over thirty-five years of strong domestic manufacturing. State radio in Tanzania was given the task of promoting Tanzanian music but never kept figures on the proportion of airplay that was in fact rather than in policy terms reserved for Tanzanian as opposed to Congolese Tanzanian music. Listeners say Kinshasa bands never went off the air during this period when foreign music was supposedly so restricted. This was because the national policy on strictly local content was tempered by the fact that foreign music that was allowed on request and it appears that the Congolese, according to the memories of listeners, dominated requests for foreign music. Fans remember there being a steady flow of requests for Congolese music on the radio. Airplay never appears to have been consistently monitored to ensure compliance with state directives at this level of detail in the way that has been established in South Africa since 1994 for instance. In the absence of such figures from record companies and the state broadcasters, even before the advent of mass piracy in the late 1980s the memory of those involved in the business and those producing and listening to broadcasts is all we have to go by.

Memories vary anywhere from 20% to 60% for record sales and broadcast time, for the proportion occupied by Congolese music between 1960 and 1990 in Kenya.<sup>294</sup>

Whether you listened to the English, Swahili or other vernacular languages obviously affects these perceptions. Which music your record company specialised in

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<sup>294</sup> Interviews with broadcasters, and listeners in Dar es Salaam. Figures for 'foreign African music' from Wallis and Malm (1993) from their survey of radio play in the late 1980s, are far lower at 10%. They make no distinction between Kenyan and Kenyan based Congolese music though. The figures I give are popular perceptions which are interesting in themselves. These figures have no basis in survey data.

marketing would have similar effects. The Kenyan media was not liberalised until the late 1990s when the first private radio and television stations went on air. The Kenya Broadcasting Company (KBC) was the only national broadcaster up until this point. It may seem surprising given this that KBC wasn't given the job of promoting a national music as in Tanzania. What occurred instead was an extension of a radio policy that allotted airtime to the main language groups of Kenya, the Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya and so on and the promotion of music in those languages. Alongside this there was a national English service dominated musically by Europe and America and a Swahili language service.<sup>295</sup> It was this Swahili service that the Congolese and Tanzanian musicians dominated with some noteworthy Kenyan additions. By contrast Nyerere and TANU made a bold and daring language policy decision aimed at nation building. In April 1965 when the Tanganyika Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) was dissolved and Radio Tanzania, Dar es Salaam (RTD) established by act of parliament, the new station adopted a policy for the exclusive use of Swahili for national broadcasting with no concessions to either regular English or the many vernacular languages (Patterson, S. 2004: 15).

Whatever the reality of the figures mentioned above and however they have varied over this period what is clear is that all Kenyans recognise that no particular domestic music was able to compete with Congolese music for a pan-national market share in the post-independence era.<sup>296</sup> It is in this that there exists a major contrast

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<sup>295</sup> Wallis and Malm (1992: 87) provide statistics for these different services on the proportion of Kenyan pop music in 1986 averaging at 66% at a time when the pressure was on to air more local music. They do not however differentiate Kenyan from Congolese Kenyan pop music.

<sup>296</sup> That situation has changed in the new millennia with the advent of Swahili Hip Hop and Rap and the deepening of a long-term relationship with international pop. See Stroeken (2005) on those changes in 'This is not a Haircut: Neoliberalism and revolt in Kiswahili Rap' and Remes (1999)



with Tanzania. In Tanzania urban guitar based dance bands with a national appeal started coming into being not long after they did in the Congos in the 1940s and 1950s. When this development occurred it was with a similar mix of local and diasporic ingredients that evolved in Leopoldville and Brazzaville as the name of one Tanzanian band from this era indicates – the Cuban Marimba Band.<sup>297</sup> In the Tanzanian case the added influence of *taarab* music can also be heard in the early work of Salum Abdullah (Storm Roberts 1999: 218). In Tanzania early developments did not centre exclusively on the capital – something of a unique occurrence. The Morogoro Jazz Band was founded as early as 1944 (Graebner 2000a). This nascent national modern urban dance band tradition with pan ethnic appeal thrived after independence in a way that cannot be found in Kenya. In Tanzania, unlike Kenya, local music was supported by the mid 1960s policy already mentioned that gave in theory a minimum of 70% airtime to Tanzanian music. There is one numerical measure of the relative popularity of different genres in Kenya at least. That is which records sold sufficient numbers to warrant being given gold discs. Again the reliability of the figures on which these awards were based is open to question. Nonetheless the absence of a single local Kenyan band from the list is an indicator of the widely recognised contrast between the pan national appeal of Congolese music and the limited appeal of Kenyan performers using demographically limited languages since independence. During the period when

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‘Global Popular Musics and Changing Awareness of Urban Tanzanian Youth’. For a survey of the prominent figures in the Rap scene go to Malm’s website:

<http://www.musikmuseet.se/mmm/africa/dar.html>. For a site dedicated to African Hip Hop that provides a survey of the scene in Dar es Salaam and the role of radio in its development see:

[http://www.africanhiphop.com/tanup/dar\\_up.htm](http://www.africanhiphop.com/tanup/dar_up.htm)

<sup>297</sup> Listen to track 14 (CD 1) for an example of their music and the evidence of the Latin influence.

record sales were still important that of the five LP's that had reached the Gold Disc status by selling more than 65,000 not one was vernacular (Douglas Paterson 1986).

Another measure of the extent to which Congolese music occupied and developed the place of an African popular music for urban Kenya is the number of Congolese bands resident in Kenya over the years and the position they have occupied in the nightlife of the major conurbations. To this can be added the frequency with which Congolese stars have made tours of Kenya and the welcome they have received.

This history is possible to document without the doubts that surround record sales, the proportion of radio airplay and audience figures for the programmes on which Congolese music predominated - though there is little doubt that in all these fields the Congolese achieved a larger share than any other single genre, at least for the first thirty years of independence if not in the new millennium.<sup>298</sup> It is the resident Congolese bands in Kenya that have provided the stable base and visible presence, through live performances and national touring, for the enduring strength of the Congolese musical presence in Kenya.

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<sup>298</sup> The new millennium has seen the gradual erosion of the Congolese predominance in Kenyan and Tanzanian urban popular music by new local competition. Three factors have contributed to this tendency. The first has been the development of a new urban form, Swahili Rap, which has proved popular with Kenyan and Tanzanian youth. The second is that the long-standing popularity of Gospel music has increased partly as a consequence of Moi's longstanding support for the music. The third factor has been the liberalisation of the media in Kenya and Tanzania and the subsequent proliferation of radio and TV channels over the last ten years. *Kiss 100* started broadcasting in July 2000 in Kenya and has established the biggest audience amongst the private stations. The station has targeted the 15 to 30 year old age group and has used music, particularly the new Swahili Rap, American and European music, as its main marketing device. Similarly in Tanzania the most popular private station is *Clouds FM*, which uses a similar formula and began broadcasting in the late 1990s. Both also use Congolese music but the market place is more crowded now and there are two decidedly national competitors in the form of Kenyan Swahili Rap and Gospel.

## 7:2 Kenya

When the elements of a music industry in the form of record pressing plants and national radio broadcasting began to develop in Nairobi in the 1950s it was the sound of Jean Bosco Mwenda from Katanga and his cousin Edouard Masengo that were the first Congolese musician to be recorded.<sup>299</sup> Masengo, like Wendo, developed his performance skills touring the Congo with Belgian sponsorship.<sup>300</sup> The arrival of the second generation of Congolese musicians after independence began with the large bands that included horn sections. This movement was led by Lubumbashi's Baba Gaston Ilunga, who after frequent visits in the late 1960s, moved his band, Bana Gaston, to Nairobi permanently in 1975, after twenty years performing in Lubumbashi where he was a star. His departure was a big loss to the Eastern Congolese scene (Mantibah M. in Jewsiewicki, (ed). 2003: 13-18). He proceeded over the following years to invite many of the musicians that formed the backbone of Nairobi's Congolese scene. Boma Liwanza and Bana Ngenge were already in Nairobi by 1975 and Samba Mapangala and Les Kinois later Orchestre Virunga, and Les Mangelepa (who formed as a breakaway from Bana Gaston in 1974) all became household names on the Voice of Kenya in the 1970s.<sup>301</sup> In the 1980s an equivalent of the third generation appeared in the form of Ibeba system and the 1984 band Vundumuna. After a downturn in the mid 1990s the Congolese came back with a

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<sup>299</sup> For a biographical summary based on Kubik's works see [smithsonianglobalsound.org/feature\\_01G.aspx](http://smithsonianglobalsound.org/feature_01G.aspx)

<sup>300</sup> Fortunately Masengo recorded his life story before his death in 2003 for Mwenda (2003). 'Edouard Masengo Katiti (1933-2003): Souvenirs d'une Carrière.' in Jewsiewicki (Ed.)

<sup>301</sup> See Paterson's entry in the *World Music: The Rough Guide*, (1999: 511-522) for an overview of the Kenyan pop scene and its history which includes a section on the arrival of the Congolese. For long lists of the Congolese musicians that formed the Kenyan scene see Julian Thorpe's website. Listen to the song *Yembele* (CD 2 track 5) for an example of the work of Samba Mapangala and Orchestra Virunga recorded in Nairobi in 1984.

vengeance in the late 1990s with the arrival of the fourth or Wenge generation, which provided the stimulus for an exodus eastwards from the Congo. Senza Musica, Choc la Musica, Rumba Japan and Bilenge Musica once again filled the nightclubs of Nairobi after a time when Euro-American pop looked set to wipe the board. Coming primarily from Katanga and Eastern Congo meant they already had Swahili even if it was spoken with an accent that meant they were immediately identifiable as Congolese. What musicians of all these generations say is that despite being outsiders they found themselves warmly welcomed by the population.<sup>302</sup>

Two Britons started the first record company, East African Studios Ltd. (EAS), and pressing plant in Nairobi in 1947. The label they started was called Jambo Records (Harrev 1989). In these early days the music recorded was the work of amateur Kenyan musicians who recorded two songs at a time. A great Kenyan musician, Fadhili Williams, joined the company at this time. The company first started recording Edouard Masengo in 1958. The Kenyan counterpart of the Belgian patronage and support for Congolese music is probably best represented by one Peter Colmore, a Briton who organised variety shows in the 1950s. It was also Colmore who formed the 'Peter Colmore African Band' using imported Rhodesian musicians because as his long time collaborator Ally Sykes put it 'at that time Kenyan musicians had not yet taken up playing modern instruments' (Sykes 2004). Masengo settled in Nairobi in 1958. Colmore acted as Masengo's manager doing sponsorship and promotion deals with Coca Cola. In 1959 he brought Masengo's cousin, Jean

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<sup>302</sup> Interviews with members of Mazembe, Virunga and Mangelepa in Nairobi 2002/02

Bosco Mwenda, to East Africa to promote Aspro pills and he toured East Africa with Masengo.<sup>303</sup>

A.I. Records started by the Andrews family in Nairobi in 1957 built a studio and a wholesale business in the early 1970s and released the work of the Congolese bands that had moved to Nairobi in the 1960s most notably Super Mazembe.<sup>304</sup> Kassongo wa Kanema, a singer in Super Mazembe, said that the poor recording facilities in Lubumbashi and the reputedly good ones in Nairobi is was what first attracted them to Kenya.<sup>305</sup> Super Mazembe went on to record in all four studios that existed in the 1970s – Peter Colmore’s High Fidelity, Andrew Crawford’s AI Records, a studio called Sapra and after 1976 the only major with a studio as well as record production capacity PolyGram (East African Records).<sup>306</sup> Super Mazembe, meaning bulldozer, became one of the most popular of the Congolese bands in Nairobi. They arrived when the Congolese were riding high and survived for almost thirty years. When Kassongo arrived he noticed that Kenya had not been drawn into the rumba craze in the way Tanzania was.

- *It strikes me that the popularity of Congolese music in Africa mirrors that of Latin music.*

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<sup>303</sup> Ally Sykes ‘Peter Colmore: The Man With the Midas Touch. A personal memoir of East Africa's first and most successful impresario by his long-time friend and business associate, the equally illustrious Ally Sykes of Tanzania’ Monday, February 16, 2004 *East African* For an example of the involvement of Ally Sykes in the music business listen to track 3 on the attached CD.

<sup>304</sup> See AIR website for more information: [www.airecords-africa.com/docs/about.htm](http://www.airecords-africa.com/docs/about.htm)

<sup>305</sup> Interviewed in Nairobi 20/03/02

<sup>306</sup> Record production stopped in Kenya in 1990 when Polygram pulled out and sold its assets (Wallis and Malm 1992: 87). Production halved from 2.4 million singles in 1981 to just over 1 million in 1986 with cassette piracy as the main cause. LP production remained static at around 140,000 during this period. A sale of 1,000 was considered a top seller.

**Kassongo** – Sure. That influence is not in Kenya. Kenyans knew the Congolese rumba but they weren't buying Cuban music. I heard that music in Tanzania. When I arrived they were actually pressing the Cuban records here in Nairobi and selling them in Tanzania where they were popular but not here...We sang in Swahili in Lubumbashi. But for the market here we sing Swahili and Lingala. But when we came here first we had many Lingala songs – so we had to record those first.<sup>307</sup> We have no Kenyan Benga influence.<sup>308</sup> Our music is typically Congolese it has nothing to do with Benga. (Interviewed in Nairobi 20/03/02)

The role of visiting stars was also important for the popularity of Congolese music. Tabu Ley with Mbilia Bel and Tshala Muana both had long spells in Kenya and developed big followings in the early eighties. Tabu Ley first came to Nairobi in the 1960s and in following years used Nairobi as a base for his East African tours. He settled for a while in Nairobi in the 1980s when his relationship with Mobutu became too difficult and sent some of his children to school there. He like Franco used the production and distribution facilities to get records for the East African market and to import into Zaire when production in Kinshasa became problematic in the late 1980s.<sup>309</sup> Franco first came to Kenya in the 1970s and became a regular in the 1980s. Franco did particularly big tours of Kenya in 1980, 1981, 1986 and 1987. These two musicians paved the way for those to come. A new wave of mass popularity grew with the arrival of the Zaiko generation. They visited Kenya

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<sup>307</sup> It is interesting that Super Mazembe arrived in Nairobi with a Lingala repertoire in 1974 even though Kassongo says here that they also sang in Swahili in Lubumbashi. Many bands in Eastern Congo in the years following independence moved away from Swahili to Lingala.

<sup>308</sup> Benga is a Kenyan urban dance music.

<sup>309</sup> Tabu Ley interviewed in Kinshasa 24/09/05

according to Ngaira in 1988 and did five or six shows.<sup>310</sup> The following year, 1989, saw the arrival of Kanda Bongo Man for the first time. Kanda drew some of the biggest crowds of all time to the international stadium and the regional sports stadiums. In 1991 Kanda was expelled during another tour under a cloud of suspicion that Moi's mistress had fallen for him.<sup>311</sup> The picture below is of the publicity in the Daily Nation from November 1<sup>st</sup> 1991 in the run up to the tour. Kanda planned to repeat his stadium and nightclub gigs around the country.


**MOI'S CHAIR**  
**NOVEMBER ISSUE**  
**NOW ON SALE**

**LIONS CLUB OF NAIROBI LIVINGSTON RAFFLE DRAW 18TH OCTOBER 1991, MAMA NGINA CHILDREN'S HOME**

Prizes put in touch with Mrs P. W. Livingstone Tel. 547195 Box 48867 NAIROBI.

| Tickets drawn as follows: | TICKET NO. |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1st prize                 | 583        |
| 2nd prize                 | 1228       |
| 3rd prize                 | 828        |
| 4th prize                 | 942        |
| 5th prize                 | 468        |
| 6th prize                 | 1882       |
| 7th prize                 | 1837       |
| 8th prize                 | 1377       |
| 9th prize                 | 728        |
| 10th prize                | 1140       |
| 11th prize                | 287        |
| 12th prize                | 1152       |
| 13th prize                | 875        |
| 14th prize                | 1069       |
| 15th prize                | 1751       |
| 16th prize                | 1862       |
| 17th prize                | 1587       |
| 18th prize                | 1220       |
| 19th prize                | 154        |
| 20th prize                | 965        |

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**NAIROBIA**

**KANDA BONGO MAN**

AT THE NEW STANLEY

Kwasa - Kwasa ni sasa - sasa!  
Kanda Bongoman is back in Nairobi with a bang to do his thing at the Ballroom of the NEW STANLEY HOTEL, Nairobi, on Thursday 7th Nov, from 8.30 pm onwards.  
Don't miss this Deeper Dance including a Grand Raffle with plenty of prizes to be won. All for 900/- per person.

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Entertainment Guide Mombasa  
**CINEMA GUIDE**

| KENYA          | STRUCK BY LIGHTNING                                |
|----------------|--|
| At 5.45 & 9 pm | A serious comedy<br>John McConald & Brian Vennards |

| LOTUS         | P.O.W. THE ESCAPE                          |
|---------------|--|
| At 8 & 9 p.m. | The most daring escape, behind enemy lines |

| MAJESTIC         | NYAY ANYAY           |
|------------------|----------------------|
| At 8 & 9.15 p.m. | Jaminda, Jaji Phakia |


| MOONS            | FIRE WALKER |
|------------------|-------------|
| At 8 & 9.15 p.m. | Chaka       |

**KANDA BONGOMAN**  
**Live in Kenya!**  
**Back due to great public demand**

Friday 8th Nov. 1991  
CARNIVORE  
10.00 p.m.  
**Charges: 500/-**

Saturday 9th Nov. 1991  
BOMAS OF KENYA  
10.00 p.m.  
**Charges: 250/-**

Sunday 10th Nov. 1991  
NYAYO STADIUM  
10.00 p.m.  
**Charges: CENTRE Stand: 100/-**  
Others: 50/-  
Children: 30/-



**COME AND MEET THE KING OF KWASA KWASA**  
**Watch out for Mombasa**  
**Concerts next week**

Kenyan Nation 1/11/1991

<sup>310</sup> Amos Ngaira interviewed in Nairobi 18/03/02


<sup>311</sup> See forthcoming Centre for African Studies occasional paper for the full story.


In the 1990s the most popular visiting stars were Tshala Muana, Koffi Olomide, General Defao and Arlus Mabele, and the band Loketo who drew huge crowds before the rise of the Wenge generation saw another swathe of Congolese musicians make their way to Kenya for big shows in the form of J.B. Mpiana, Werra Son and the band Nouvelle Generation. These shows tended to be more successful when they had the backing of professional promoters like K.W.M. Kayembe.

DAILY NATION, FRIDAY, JULY 19, 1991

**MINAR YAYA CENTRE**  
Fully booked for private party tonight. Our restaurants at Sarit Centre and Banda Screen open as usual. Any inconvenience is regretted.  
**MINAR RESTAURANT LTD.**  
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**Garden Square**  
City Hall Way Presents  
**FREE OPEN AIR SHOW**  
Live Music Stage Show by Orchestra Super Mawembe  
on Saturday 20th July 1991 from 4.00 p.m. till 8.30 p.m.  
Plus the Lady Fanta's Chachacha and the winning City Rockets. Also **Wine** on Wednesdays, Fridays & Saturdays  
**A WELCOME FOR ALL THE FAMILY MEMBERS!!!**

TAMUKATI'S PRODUCTIONS COMPANY  
in association with CARNIVORE and Hotel Inter-Continental Nairobi  
Proudly Present  
**TSHALA MUANA**  
LIVE IN NAIROBI  
  
Jul 24th 8.00 p.m. Special V.I.P. Dinner Show  
Hotel Inter-Continental  
Charges: Shs. 800 per head (inclusive of Dinner)  
Jul 25th 10.00 a.m. Carnivore  
Charges: Shs. 300.00 per head  
Jul 27th 11.00 a.m. Sade's Discotheque  
Charges: Shs. 300.00 per head  
Tel: 335560 Inter-Continental  
All Major Credit Cards  
Accepted for advance booking

John sez.... JOIN US AT  
**GRINGO'S**  
FOR LIVE ENTERTAINMENT! EVERY WEEKEND.  
THIS WEEKEND: FORVICS BAND AND NETWORK AFRICA  
**COME PARTY!**  
☆ Every Wed. Night at our Island Disco 1,000/- Cash Prize to the Best Dance Couple ☆  
  
1 KM PAST Runda Estate on Limuru Road  
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**Entertainment Guide Mombasa**  
**CINEMA GUIDE**

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>KENYA</b><br>At 5.45 & 9 p.m.    | <b>BIGGLES</b><br>Neil Dickson, Kelly Preston  |
| <b>LOTUS</b><br>At 6 & 9 p.m.       | <b>CRIME LORDS</b><br>From the streets of Los Angeles to the 'secret inner' circuit of Hong Kong. Two cops are about to face the power of crime lords. |
| <b>MAJESTIC</b><br>At 6 & 9.15 p.m. | <b>SWARG</b><br>Rajeshi Gowinda, Juhu, Chawla  |

Kilimanjaro International Productions, Inc.  
Presents  
**AURLUS MABELE**  
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with  
**LOKETO**  
VENUE: KICC 31st July & 2nd Aug.  
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Above is some typical publicity in the Daily Nation from July 1991 for two Congolese stars visiting at the same time – Tshala Muana at the Hotel Inter Continental and the Carnivore and Arlus Mabele with Loketo in the Kenya International Conference Centre. Up in the top right hand corner the resident Super Mazembe are also advertised at one of their residencies.

Besides appealing to the Kenyan population the Congolese musicians also accommodated themselves to the ruling party. Tabu Ley composed songs for KANU and the president.<sup>312</sup> Mbilia Bel recorded a song with Tabu Ley composed for Moi in Swahili.

*Twende Nairobi* Let's go to Nairobi

*Tumuimbie baba Moi* To sing for the father of the nation Moi.

The Congolese star Samba Mapangala was enlisted to work with another international Congolese star Pépé Kallé to tour Kenya to encourage voters to support KANU in 1992. Kassongo wa Kanema described how he had performed regularly at Independence Day celebrations for KANU since first arriving in Kenya in 1974. The theme of Congolese musical complicity in providing propaganda for the Kenyan one party state and the contrast with various local musicians involved in musical resistance of one sort or another is the subject of Wekesa's (2004) work.<sup>313</sup> That complicity could be seen, in part at least, as a consequence of the relatively precarious position of Congolese musicians without citizenship in Kenya.

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<sup>312</sup> Tabu Ley interviewed in Kinshasa 24/09/05

<sup>313</sup> Wekesa is also concerned with the functionalist, Marxist and post-colonial academic correlates of these two political roles popular music can be seen to play, as well as a definition of popular music following this that is not confined by the nature of its production and consumption.

Sporadically after 1980 the Government of Kenya attempted to enforce local content quotas for music on the Voice of Kenya (VoK). This policy was first declared in March 1980, when the figure of 80% was announced, at a time when the government was worried that many listeners were tuning in to radio from Zaire and Tanzania for their African music. At this time Kenya was in dispute with Tanzania over Tanzania's invasion and deposition of Idi Amin in Uganda (Wallis and Malm 1992: 94). Wallis and Malm (1992) describe how in 1980 the national quota policy was withdrawn after just two weeks due to pressure from broadcasters and the small group of influential middle class listeners. Wallis and Malm see the colonial legacy of viewing European music as superior to African as being particularly strong amongst this group and their control of radio policy and practice meant there was very little Kenyan music on the radio between 1963 and 1980 in contrast to Tanzania and Zaire. The Voice of Kenya never even established the capacity to record local music and relied entirely on the private sector to supply free samples (Wallis and Malm 1992: 89) whereas the opposite was true of Radio Tanzania. This may be why a 1983 study of listening habits of rural and urban slum dwellers found 50% tuning in to broadcasts from Zaire and 22% from Tanzania (Ibid). Fears that 'traditional music' encouraged 'traditional values' and encouraged 'backwardness' were exacerbated for the VoK vetting committee controlling music on the radio by the fear that local music would also be used to criticise the government. This meant there was ambivalence about a Kenyan music quota system. After Tabu Ley composed the song *Twende Nairobi* in 1985 another short-lived attempt to impose the restriction on foreign music was lifted.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Information taken from <http://kenyapage.net/franco/tabu.html> and confirmed by Tabu Ley Kinshasa 16/09/05

The urban popular music form invented by the Kenyans in the 1960s, *Benga*, exemplified by D.O. Misiiani's *Sharati Jazz*, never established and maintained the popularity of Congolese *rumba* partly, it seems, because it was performed in the more restricted vernaculars and never achieved the national linguistic unity created in Congo by *Lingala*. Before them the first generation of Kenyan singers, most notably *Fadhili Williams*, *Daudi Kabaka* and *Fundi Konte*, used *Swahili* to reach all Kenyans. The origins of this contrast lie in part in the nature of the history of the independence movement in Kenya and of the ethnic politics of *Kenyatta* and *Moi*'s presidencies. On these subjects there is a substantial literature.<sup>315</sup> There is however very little reference in this literature to the relationship between popular culture in general and music in particular and the political economy and the post-independence nationalist project.<sup>316</sup> A central feature of the analysis made by *Schatzberg* (1987: 18 and 34-5) *Ogot and Ochieng* (1995: 51) and *Haugerud* (1995: 41-55) is the important role of ethnicity in the formation of ruling elites and the distribution of patronage and the complex interactions there have been between class and ethnicity in the struggle for independence and post-independence politics. The perception of the population in Kenya following independence is that *Kenyatta* used his presidency to ensure the flow of government resources to his own domestic regional constituency amongst the *Kikuyu* and the gradual marginalisation of his *Luo* allies. There were national musical figures at independence but they received no state patronage and perceived

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<sup>315</sup> Apart from works comparing Tanzania and Kenya already mentioned most of the literature on the Kenyan political economy deals with the subject of ethnicity especially in relation to the legacy of the history of *Mau Mau*. See *Berman* (1991) and *Lonsdale* (1992 and 2000). See also *Ogot, and Ochieng*, (eds) (1995) *Michael G. Schatzberg*, (ed) (1987); *Swainson* (1980); *Widner* (1992).

<sup>316</sup> *Ogot, and Ochieng* (1995: 226) for the briefest of references.

ethnic favouritism amongst judges undermined the respect for national musical competitions for many Kenyans.

Masolo (2000) elucidates how Kenyan popular music is intimately connected to the conduct of national politics. Masolo speaks unapologetically from a Luo perspective and puts flesh on the bones that Paterson draws of the linguistically and ethnically divided music scene in Kenya. Paterson's explanation for the persistence of the basic ethnic musical divisions between Luo, Luhya, Kamba, Kikuyu and Swahili popular music in Kenya, the division that has left the nation wide market open to the Congolese between 1950 and 2000, is insufficient. Paterson only refers to the commercial calculations of the Kenyan musicians fearful of losing the limited but secure audiences working in the linguistically and ethnically specific idioms as preventing the majority of them from taking the risk of moving in the national direction offered by Swahili. What Paterson does not refer to is how national politics has shaped the ethnicisation of Kenyan society and of the music that has come out of that society. The assassination of the most prominent Luo politician and former ally of Kenyatta in KANU, Tom Mboya, in 1969, by a Kikuyu became a symbol of Luo exclusion. It was used overtly and covertly in the songs of D.O. Misiiani and George Ramogi to express the need for Luo solidarity in the face of such attacks on their leaders. One such song by George Ramogi was banned (Masolo 2000). The sentiments Masolo expresses are ones that chime with those of some interviewees speaking more generally about the way patrimonial politics has tended to reinforce musical particularism. This ethnicisation of the practice of politics appears to have combined with the effects of a colonial mentality and Western orientation in music

policy at the VoK after independence to prevent the investment going in to Kenyan pop music that was and is necessary to produce the level of quality necessary to compete with Zairian and Tanzanian music. The Kenya Arts Co-operative Society (ARTCO) was formed to represent Kenyan musicians in the 1980s who felt economically excluded. Even the president of this society felt more exposure of their music on the radio did them a disservice when its quality was so low (Wallis and Malm 1992: 106).

Moi and Kenyatta both used music, maybe even copying Mobutu, to develop their personality cults, but they never turned to their own Kenyan popular music, except amongst their own ethnic groups, to this end, because they never developed strong enough cultural and language strategies of the sort pursued by Mobutu to sponsor the development of a properly national form that would have served these ends. Instead they turned to massed choirs, folk music and, in the case of Moi, Kenyan Gospel to reach a national audience when it came to music. When it came to popular dance music it was the Congolese to whom they turned for praise songs and crowd pullers to KANU rallies. By contrast Kenyan popular musicians, unless they were Kikuyu under Kenyatta or Kalenjin under Moi, were more likely to use their music to appeal first to their own ethnic groups. If they dabbled in politics they used their music to make covert critiques of the powers that be and attack those amongst their own collaborating in their ethnic exclusion from the fruits of independence. The Luo musician D.O. Misiani, of Shirati Jazz fame is the best-known example.

### 7:3 Tanzania

Tanzania's largest city Dar es Salaam has drawn Congolese musicians from Eastern Congo just as Nairobi has drawn those who have gone to Kenya.<sup>317</sup> In spite of the rural emphasis in Nyerere's policies the population of Dar es Salaam saw the same dramatic increases that have characterized all African capitals during his time in office from 160,000 in 1960 to 820,000 in 1990.<sup>318</sup> Tanzania is a country whose major city is on the coast. On this coast the particularism of ethnicity that has afflicted the politics and society of landlocked Nairobi, began to give way to a powerfully inclusive Swahili identity well before independence in 1963.<sup>319</sup> This Swahili identity could include, at least in part, Swahili speakers from Eastern Congo. Conversation about the way in which the Congolese or their children felt about the relationship between being Congolese and/or Tanzanian never generated much concern or sense of tension. These concerns are artistic, political, and economic.

Nyerere's politics and policies affected the Congolese in various ways. The Congolese always remained in the private sector while it was being squeezed by the nationalization Nyerere instituted after the Arusha declaration in 1967. Second cultural traditionalism and a rural emphasis were central to Nyerere's thinking. This traditionalism saw him turning to music with rural origins as the appropriate carrier of Tanzanian national culture and away from popular urban dance music, sentiments

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<sup>317</sup> There are no significant Congolese bands that have been based outside of these two cities in either country for the obvious reason that markets and marketing forces are concentrated there. The capital of Tanzania is officially Dodoma.

<sup>318</sup> See appendix 3 for statistics.

<sup>319</sup> Mazrui (1995); Caplan and Topan (eds.) (2004). See Tadasu Tsuruta (2003) on the broader role of popular culture especially sport.

he expressed in his inaugural address as president (Nyerere 1966: 186-7). Nyerere made a selective espousal of 'indigenous African culture', as long as it furthered the cause of socialism and national unity (Askew 2002: 15, 25, 171, 179, 224, 275-276). This 'indigenous African culture' was *ngoma* for Nyerere when it came to music and he made this clear in his public pronouncements.

Unlike Kenya, where ethnicity and language have fragmented popular musical styles the music of Tanzania can be categorized into four main fields or genres that are national, and are not separated by language one of which is the fairly unified field of popular urban dance music. The first of the four genres is *ngoma*, which is more properly seen as a form of performance than simply a form of music. *Ngoma* is acoustic music and dance with rural pre-colonial origins but which has since seen the development of urban forms (Ranger 1975; Gunderson and Barz (eds) 2000).

Second *taarab*, which is sung Swahili poetry normally performed with acoustic orchestras. It originated in the Indian Ocean on the islands of Zanzibar and the Swahili speaking coast of East Africa at the interface of African and Arabic cultures, following the establishment of the Omani Sultanate on Zanzibar in the nineteenth century.<sup>320</sup> The third genre is *kwaya* (choir) music.<sup>321</sup> Fourth there is *dansi*, which is urban electric East African popular music that has its origins in the adoption of European ballroom music in the 1930s by the urban African elite and parallels developments in Congo. *Dansi* developed after the Second World War into a hybrid form incorporating elements of *ngoma*, brass band music, diasporic Latin American

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<sup>320</sup> On *taarab* see Askew (2002); Graebner (1999b); Lange (1999; 2002).

<sup>321</sup> Barz (2003) has produced work on Tanzanian *kwaya* music. Askew indicates that she plans future work on *kwaya* music as well as *mchiriku*, Swahili Rap and Swahili Reggae (2002: 338n).

influences and a strong tradition of Swahili song.<sup>322</sup> Kelly Askew, in what seems like an unguarded moment, describes *dansi* as ‘heavily Zairean-influenced urban popular music’ (2002: 69). Werner Graebner (1992a; 1992b; 1999; 2000), Gerhard Kubik (1981), Martin (1980; 1991), and Tsuruta (2000; 2003) have produced work on the history of *dansi*. This complex musical space is one into which the Congolese moved, competed and thrived with each new phase of generational development back home.

State policy is not necessarily the same as state practice. For all Nyerere’s public pronouncements about the foreign and Western taint in Tanzanian *dansi*, more state patronage was provided for the urban *dansi* bands under the umbrella of TANU, and after 1977 the CCM, through trade unions, police, army and youth organs, than was provided for rural *ngoma* groups. It was these Tanzanian *dansi* bands with which the Congolese had to compete. So the Congolese arriving in Tanzania, especially after independence, faced far stiffer competition for national space than they did in Kenya, competition from bands with the advantage of patronage from public bodies. In Kenya the state and ruling party shied away from direct patronage of popular dance music and never pursued a vigorous Swahili language policy. Bands representing each branch of the state were established bearing the name of their service, usually with the addition, as in Zaire, of the word Jazz. Hence we have the establishment after independence of the Polisi Jazz, (Dar es Salaam Police Force), JKT Kimbunga (National Service Army), the Magereza Jazz Band (Prison Authority) and DDC Mlimani Park (Dar es Salaam Development Corporation). The last of these has

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<sup>322</sup> The fashion in recent ethnomusicology has been to abandon the modern/traditional dichotomy for analytical purposes and for good reasons. See for instance Palmberg and Kirkegaard et al. (2002)



proved the most enduring for musical as well as organizational reasons. Similarly outside the public sector in the labour movement, but still closely linked to TANU, the Tanzanian trade unions organization started one of the most popular *dansi* bands in Tanzania in 1964, sponsored and owned by the union. Like DDC Mlimani Park it has survived the transition to multi-partyism and extensive privatization. The name OTTU Jazz settled in 1977, though the union has changed its name. OTTU stands for the Organization of Tanzanian Trade Unions.<sup>323</sup> There appears to have been a decline in the private Tanzanian bands led by Tanzanians with the rise of the TANU sponsored state bands after independence.<sup>324</sup> Despite this state funded competition the Congolese still managed to establish and maintain a strong presence in Tanzania in the years following independence in 1964.

It is interesting that the role of the Congolese in Tanzania tends to get subsumed in the general evolution of *dansi* in the academic work on popular music, for instance in the work of Ranger, Graebner and Askew. Although *dansi* is a particular interest of Graebner's it is Askew that has made a more developed argument about the role of music in the evolution of the Tanzanian nation since independence. By a detailed ethnographic account of the relation between specific Tangan musicians and local representatives of the state, Askew attempts to make the case for a broadening of nationalist studies to include the uses made of popular culture – especially music – by citizens and state in the imagining of the nation. In this regard the strong presence of foreign musicians and bands in *dansi* music, the genre that dominated the

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<sup>323</sup> The two previous names for the trade union were NUTA (leading to NUTA Jazz) until 1977, then JUWATA (hence JUWATA jazz) and finally OTTU.

<sup>324</sup> See appendix 7 for a full list of Tanzanian bands during this era and more evidence of contrast in the number of Tanzanian led state sponsored bands and private Congolese led bands.

urban musical soundscape after independence, is interesting and not an issue Askew addresses. Askew pays particular attention to how, with the rising popularity of *taarab* during the 1990s on the mainland, the CCM has attempted to reinvent itself for the electorate by adopting the previously rejected musical form. The CCM has created a new group that combines *ngoma*, theatre, *taarab* and *dansi* for this purpose, Tanzania One Theatre (TOT). Given Askew's central proposition on the two way flow between state and citizenry in the continual reinvention of the nation she provides a remarkable amount of evidence for how state officials have used musicians for the promotion of themselves and their nationalist vision and how little it has paid them for doing so. Askew's relative neglect of the contribution *dansi* has made to Tanzanian nationalism needs to be redressed given that it has been the most popular urban musical form in Tanzania since independence.<sup>325</sup> It has after all been closely identified with and received the most sponsorship from the branches of state and party. The control the government exercised over radio policy in Tanzania was coloured by the tension between the socialist 'development' agenda and the rural orientation of Nyerere's cultural and economic agenda. 'For many intellectuals modernised *ngoma* cannot represent development. To them the symbol of development is the Swahili jazz band with Western instruments. Many employees at Radio Tanzania prefer jazz band music to *ngoma*. This is also mirrored in the dominance of Swahili jazz in the music output of the radio' (Malm and Wallis 1992: 116). By the late 1960s Tanzanian newspapers had already been voicing concerns about the dominance and pressure of the Congolese bands and musicians on

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<sup>325</sup> Given Askew's concern with the absence of popular culture and performance from nationalist studies, music seems to have come to stand for the whole field. Tanzanian nationalism could cope with the strong presence of Congolese music because it was constituted of many other threads, sport in particular. See Tadasu Tsuruta (2003).

Tanzanian musicians and this is a theme that came to be repeated right up until 2005.<sup>326</sup> In 1973 the government instituted a 100% Tanzanian music policy. Though this excluded Kinshasa based bands for a while it did not affect the Congolese based in Tanzania. In the 1980s this policy was relaxed and by 1992 9% of the music content on the domestic service came from 'other African countries' according Malm and Wallis (1992: 114) - though differentiating without an intimate knowledge of the music may have been difficult.

What is interesting is that Congolese bands have also performed for the CCM, frequently, according to the musicians taking the lead role at public celebrations of Tanzanian nationhood like Independence Day celebrations. It is surprising, given the Tanzanian state's limited resources but extensive nationalist aspirations, alongside the presence of a good stable of Tanzanian *dansi* bands, how Congolese bands were able to thrive under Nyerere. The early attempts by TANU to develop a nationalist radio policy was complicated by the fact that 'Tanzanian' music and 'Swahili language' music could be conflated by radio programmers and DJ's such that popular Congolese bands, like Orchestra Maquis, performing in Swahili could avoid being taken off the air at the times when the state insisted on singularly local content.<sup>327</sup> Although the quality of the recordings was poor by comparison with the studios in Nairobi the absence of private sector studios meant Radio Tanzania was in

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<sup>326</sup> See an article in the Tanzanian Standard 03/05/70 called 'Origins of the Rumba' for a good example of both excitement about the music coming from Zaire and worries about its effect in swamping local musicians. As if to underline the point there is publicity the previous day saying 'Dance to Orchestra Tip-Santa-Fe just arrived from Congo-Kinshasa at the Gateways Nightclub'.

<sup>327</sup> For a selection of both Tanzanian and Congolese led *dansi* band music recorded on Radio Tanzania listen to *Muziki wa Dansi*. The track *Makumbele* on the CD (CD 2 track 11) comes from this album. Remmy Ongala's album *Sema* contains two tracks recorded at Radio Tanzania. Listen to the Tanzanian based Congolese band, Orchestra Makassy's, 1982 recording made in the CBS studios, or the Samba Mapangala track *Yembele* on the CD (CD 2 track 5), both recorded in Nairobi, to hear the contrast in quality.

control. Kenyan national radio could not dictate radio play policy when they did not even have a studio to record Kenyan bands and so relied on international releases and the output of the private sector studios in Nairobi. The absence of good studio recording facilities in Tanzania did appear to affect what was played in discotheques as DJs looked to foreign imports for a better quality of sound for their clients (Wallis and Malm 1992: 123).

Perhaps more important than their use of Swahili for their good standing with the government was the fact that bands like Makassy composed songs in praise of Nyerere and the CCM. The leaders of Congolese bands made a particular point they said of composing and performing songs for TANU and the CCM. Listen for instance to the song *Muungano* by Orchestra Makassy and a song by Mose 'Fan Fan' simply called *CCM*.<sup>328</sup> Congolese bands have at times dominated Tanzanian popular music in the 1970s and 1980s. The tension between two strains in Nyerere's thinking mentioned at the start of this chapter, between his nationalism and his Pan-Africanism, left enough room for the Congolese to remain in Tanzania. The Congolese knew the rules. They could both support the nationalist project of the ruling party by composing songs and performing at rallies for the CCM in Swahili and at the same time their presence could stand as evidence of the government's Pan-Africanist commitment.

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<sup>328</sup> Legends of East Africa: Orchestra Makassy. The Original Recordings on ARC Music Int. LC 05111 Track 10. The song *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* by Makassy is available on Mose 'Fan Fan' – Belle Epoque Retro Afric 1994 Track 6 and is on the attached CD 2 track 2.

**Assossa** - He would often talk about unity and Pan-Africanism so he couldn't talk about that in one breath and expel Congolese musicians in the next. (Interviewed in Dar es Salaam 22/03/02)<sup>329</sup>

Orchestra Maquis, attempted to accommodate itself to the demands of the Tanzanian state and mitigate the threat of being kicked out by creating employment for Tanzanians by setting up an agricultural co-operative.<sup>330</sup>

Authors who have based themselves in East Africa appear somewhat uncomfortable with the extent of Congolese influence in the dance music of Tanzania (Martin 1991), as are many local musicians. Nonetheless some writers are aware that the 'Congolese sound was injected deep into the Tanganyikan musical scene' (Askew 2002: 98) with the arrival of many Eastern Congolese musicians in the early 1960s. These musicians were both fleeing instability in the Congo and in search of studios and new audiences. After the arrival of Mwenda and Masengo from the first generation in the 1950s, bands like Fauvette, Safari Nkoi, Pascal Onema and Nova Succès arrived in Tanzania in the 1960s from the second generation. It was not until the end of the 1960s, with the arrival of the musicians that formed the most influential Congolese bands that the Tanzanian scene really swung towards the expatriates. The bands that endured arrived in the 1970s – namely Orchestra Maquis, Orchestra Super Matimila and Orchestra Makassy. A fourth band that came to prominence in the late 1970s, and in which the Congolese formed the majority, was Orchestra Safari Sounds. Later the band split and added 'International' to its

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<sup>329</sup> Tshimanga Kallala Assossa sang with Mlimani Park as well as Orchestra Maquis.

<sup>330</sup> Nguza 'Viking' interviewed in Dar es Salaam 02/03/14

name. In the late 1980s and early 1990s a new wave of Congolese bands appeared, Zaita Musica, Tanzanite and Diamond Sound. These bands began to challenge the second-generation bands that were still using horn sections. With the arrival of Stono Musica and FM Academia in the late 1990s the hornless line up of the fourth generation in which male singers predominate made its appearance in Tanzania.

It has not just been in adjusting to the demands of the state that the Congolese have been successful. A change that helped Congolese musicians for a while was the liberalisation of the airwaves, which started as a gradual process after 1985 under President Mwinyi. The advent in the early 1990s of video technology allowed Congolese bands in Tanzania to make low budget videos of their dance routines at gigs in the same way their compatriots in Paris and Brussels started to do. They then went about getting these videos onto the TV screens of bars and, in the case of Tanzania, long distance buses. The long distance buses installed video for their captive audience of passengers in the early 1990s and Congolese music videos became the staple for these journeys. There were even video discos that specialised in Congolese music on videos around the club.

As in Kenya the touring system established in Congo has been used to perform the VIP gig in the big hotel, the middling gigs in large nightclubs and the huge gig in the stadium for everybody. While Franco remained popular in East Africa right through the 1980s with his death in 1989 the mantle passed to other performers. In the early 1990s Pépé Kallé and Empire Bakuba hit East Africa performing in Tanzania in 1990, 1991 and 1996. There was also the new sound coming out of the Congolese

scene in Paris and Europe at the end of the 1980s in the form of Papa Wemba, Kanda Bongo Man, Awilo Longomba, Les Quatre Étoiles and the band Loketo all of which made their way to Tanzania, as in Kenya and other countries in East Africa.<sup>331</sup>

Loketo performed in Tanzania in 1989 and 1994. Of the Congolese bands that came out of the European scene it is probably Kanda Bongo Man who had made the biggest splash in Tanzania. He became as well known for his dancing and trademark fashions as his music. This came about in part because of the advent of videos, video bars and buses in Tanzania at this time. The dance and sound with which he became synonymous was the *kwassa kwassa*.<sup>332</sup> Kanda Bongo Man had a huge success in Tanzania in 1992, when he pulled off the classic Congolese touring coup, modelled on the touring successes within Congo of the major stars of the previous generation. Koffi Olomide's Pan-African success started around 1994 the year of his first stadium gig in Tanzania. Koffi filled Tanzanian stadiums once again in 1999. Other stars from the third generation to perform in Tanzania in the era of the fourth generation include Papa Wemba in 1997, Madilu in 1997 and General Defao in 1998 and 2000. Wenge Musica BCBG themselves performed in 1996 and 1997, Wenge Paris in 1998 and 1999, Awilo Longomba every year from 1996 to 2001, Werra Son in 2001, Extra Musica in 2000 and Bozi Boziana in 2000. No doubt this list is not exhaustive but it gives a good idea of the steady flow of fourth generation talent that kept the Congolese flame burning and Tanzanian fans aware of developments on the international scene of the fourth generation.

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<sup>331</sup> Of these it is really only Papa Wemba who was a big star at home before becoming such an important focus of the European scene, singing as part of Zaïko Langa Langa before he went independent in the mid 1970s. Like Kanda Bongo Man it was Peter Gabriel's promotion of Papa Wemba through WOMAD that gave him a big break in Europe.

<sup>332</sup> See list of dances appendix 5.

It is only in the new millennium as the cost of work permits rose to over \$600 for each musician, in what are large bands, and a \$4000 registration fee for foreign bands with the government arts body, BASATA, that the Congolese have been displaced by what they see as Tanzanian imitators in bands like TOT, African Stars and African Revolution. African Stars have distinguished themselves from the Congolese bands by using well-known Swahili children's songs. Otherwise they stick to the *ndomobolo* musical format they have taken from the Congolese. Interestingly the owners and managers of the African Stars and African Revolution are Congolese, the Baraka family, who saw which way the wind was blowing for making money out of music. Previously Congolese bands benefited from the patronage and political cover of Tanzanian businessmen with connections. The two most significant were Batenga who owned the bars where Orchestre Maquis played and Hugo who owned the bar where IOSS played and the instruments.<sup>333</sup> The Congolese see the large increases in these government fees for work permits and permits for foreign bands as a way of displacing them without an official policy. This they see as the consequence not of pressure from Tanzanian fans but as the product of pressure from Tanzanian musicians on the government and arts minister, an arts minister with his own band, who does not want the competition.<sup>334</sup>

The subject of just how distinctive a musical voice in urban dance music was developed in East Africa, especially Tanzania, and how far it was really an effective emulation of Congolese music with Swahili lyrics, sometimes directly placed over Congolese melodies and arrangements, is still the subject of fierce debate between

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<sup>333</sup> Kasheba interviewed in Dar es Salaam 20/03/02.

<sup>334</sup> Nguza 'Viking' interviewed in Dar es Salaam 02/03/14



Congolese and East African music fans online, on radio chat shows and in bars.<sup>335</sup>

After the innovations of the 1950s in bands like the Cuban Marimba Band synthesising Arab, African and Latin influences, many Congolese musicians, although not all, see Tanzanian *dansi* as derivative. It is seen as a vital but essentially imitative form, using Congolese musical idioms, over which Swahili language songs and Tanzanian dances have been overlaid since the late 1960s at least. The music the Congolese have created in Tanzania is perceived by most of them as having remained essentially Congolese. The adoption of singularly Tanzanian Swahili within it is seen as having been the consequence of political necessity for a short period in the 1980s. Tanzanian musicians, and some fans, on the other hand see their music as having its own distinct history and that Congolese musicians have adapted to the distinct sound of Tanzanian *dansi* in order to appeal to a Tanzanian audience. Academics that have based themselves in Tanzania tend towards a similar estimation. Werner Graebner sides with the Tanzanians, as does Kelly Askew for instance.

This subject was one that generated some of the most heated discussion and revealed quite distinct perceptions of what could be considered original or distinctively Tanzanian. For Congolese musicians the inclusion of Tanzanian dance and Swahili language song in *dansi*, and their use of the word *dansi* to describe the genre, do not constitute an acceptance of the independence and originality Tanzanian *dansi*.

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<sup>335</sup> A Chat room on which an involved debate is conducted about all the sources that have gone into the evolution of an 'East African Sound' and whether such a thing exists:  
<http://216.239.59.104/search?q=cache:M5mYGg17OBsJ:africambiance.com/forum/viewtopic.php%3Ft%3D993%26highlight%3Dlingala%2Brumba+Polygram+Nairobiandhl=enandct=clnkandcd=17andclient=safari>

*- So you didn't change the music only the language. Didn't you think 'oh these people dance like that we need to change the rhythm a bit ...'?*

**Assossa** - We didn't need to change really because what the Tanzanians actually do really is Congolese music. It's thanks to us that they learnt how to play like that. Because even the old Tanzanian musicians imitated Congolese songs, but to sing them in Swahili. (Interviewed in Dar es Salaam 22/03/02)

Even Remmy Ongala, who has committed himself to Tanzania and its people and incorporated local influences, sees the Tanzanians as only too ready to imitate without significant musical modification. This view is at odds with Askew's claim that in Tanzania foreign genres are 'always ultimately subject to local aesthetic principles', unless 'ultimately' is at some permanently receding future point.<sup>336</sup>

**Ongala** - The way I have developed I have taken from here. I learnt the music from here, I listened and then I introduced my own music.

*- It's like authenticity. Did you listen to the music of different ethnic groups here then?*

**Ongala** - Yes I listened to their music. I said to myself why don't the people here play like that? Why do they have to imitate? They love to imitate,

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<sup>336</sup> 'As demonstrated by the histories of *ngoma*, *dansi* and *taarab* (as well as more recent cases of Swahili rap and Swahili reggae), foreign genres are always ultimately subject to local aesthetic principles', Askew (2002: 287).

imitate, imitate. It's not good. Now they imitate Wenge Musica.

(Interviewed in Dar es Salaam 07/03/02)

Whether Congolese musicians will survive as an important part of the Tanzanian dance music scene in the 2000s is in doubt. Tanzanian musical rivals have been on the rise since the late 1990s. Swahili Rap and Reggae as well as the ever-increasing popularity of religious music and *taarab* have combined to make *dansi* as a genre generally less dominant in Tanzania. The Congolese face the huge cost of work permits and an unsympathetic arts ministry that demands large fees to register foreign bands. Failure to conform to these requirements have led to short periods of imprisonment for fourth generation Congolese bands. They face barriers from competing with local rivals, rivals that do not face these barriers to performing. Those local rivals have mastered the dances and showmanship of the Congolese and used them to attract the audiences that previously flocked to the shows of the Congolese bands. This probably marks the end of a long period of musical prominence and at times dominance of popular dance music in Tanzania by Congolese musicians. Though their heyday maybe over they played their part in the cultural evolution of the Tanzanian nation and their enduring presence in this period demonstrates how the tight jacket of the nation can also be a loose garment capable of including outsiders. As Congolese outsiders have become insiders, Tanzanian society has found ways to include them and the influence of their music in its own self imagining as a nation. This integral role lies in stark contrast to the experience of those people who have become the focus of diaspora studies, people that are marginalised and excluded, people who find themselves battling for a place and an

identity in the countries in which they find themselves, especially in Europe and North America. The Congolese that have moved to these parts of the world struggle with the pressures of exclusion and racism like so many others.<sup>337</sup> But this is an exclusion that they do not only face in Europe. In South Africa many of the same forces of exclusion, and strategies to manage that exclusion have begun to appear since the fall of apartheid. The Congolese and West African ghettos of Paris and Brussels, ghettos that are absent in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, can now also be found in Johannesburg.

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<sup>337</sup> See MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000: 28-79) on how social exclusion is the dominant force in the lives of the Congolese in Paris, leading to strategies of economic survival in the second economy and cultural survival through independent and distinctive patterns of consumption as ways of asserting an identity.

## **Part III**

### **The Black Atlantic and Africa**

#### **Chapter Eight: The Return of the Diaspora**

We can now turn to the contrast between South Africa and the rest of Africa in its relationship to Congolese music and musicians. Gerhard Kubik's work on the origin of the blues in the USA incorporates an overview of the relationship at a musicological level between Africa and the Americas. Part of this is an attempt to establish a musicological dimension to the historical understanding of how North American, rather than Latin American music, has found fertile cultural soil in South Africa (Gerhard Kubik 1999). This orientation points away from the Latin tinge in Congolese music and is one of the factors that explains why Congolese music has not taken hold in South Africa. Kubik points to three features of pre-colonial South African musical traditions that he claims helped establish the connection with African American music from the USA rather than the Latin connection that was prevalent in so many of the countries where Congolese music has taken hold. The first point is that in pre-colonial South Africa, unlike West Africa, the voice played a more prominent musical role than the drum and this lent itself to the incorporation of both European hymnody and black American vocal harmony traditions. This is a point David Coplan also makes. 'Unlike Central and West Africa, communal music in the South was basically vocal, without drumming or other musical instrumental accompaniment, though solo performance often involved instruments, with or without voice'. (Coplan 1985:23) <sup>338</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> This was a point David Coplan used when interviewed to help explain the ready acceptance of North American vocal forms over Latin music in South Africa.

Kubik goes further than this though with his second point. He attempts to draw a musical map of Africa that distinguishes a large region centred on the Congo basin where the asymmetric time-line patterns fundamental to Latin music are also prominent in Africa. This is the classic 3:2 clave rhythm that underpins Cuban son music amongst many other forms. This area is distinguished from the core area of West Africa in Guinea and Mali where other traits fundamental to blues are prominent. For the development of black North American and Latin American music this map has to be understood in conjunction with the origin of slaves taken in Africa and their destination in the Americas and the Caribbean. The two maps Kubik has drawn of slave movements and culture regions are reproduced below. Kubik does not produce a map of the Americas showing the numbers of slaves that arrived, where slaves came from or when. This is because his argument is that the number of slaves from a particular area of Africa in a particular part of the Americas is not the most significant factor in the survival of their music.<sup>339</sup> In general the Portuguese slave trade was predominantly between what became their African colonies and their colonies in the Americas though they also took slaves from Nigeria and Dahomey. Similarly with the French and British slave trades. Thus slaves were taken from the Western Sudan, modern day Mali and Guinea, to the Ile de Gorée off the Senegalese for shipment by the French to Louisiana and the French Caribbean. The British took slaves from along the West African coast to their North American and Caribbean colonies, officially up until the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act and

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<sup>339</sup> This is not the point to survey all the literature on the slave trade. However estimates of the timing, origin and destination of slaves can be found for instance in appendices of Klein's *The Atlantic Slave Trade* who gives a figure of 500,000 for the total import of slaves to the United States 1999:46. See also Thomas (1997); Eltis, David (2001)

unofficially thereafter. Kubik's argument is that it was the adaptive suitability of a particular musical culture to the situation in which the captives found themselves that was determinative of which musical traits survived rather than the proportion of a particular ethnic group in any particular colony. This 'survival of the fittest' musical culture is a model Kubik claims applies to all situations of culture contact. In comparison to other African forms Kubik sees the lone troubadour instrumental string and vocal traditions of West Africa as better suited for survival as an underground music in the harsh and repressive environment of the Southern states than other traditions from the regions of enslavement like big court or community drum ensembles. 'The Protestant colonial mentality must have found those (lone troubador) expressions less threatening than African community music with strange drum rhythms and massive gatherings'. (Kubik 1999: 99)

His argument runs that slaves from the core region he identifies were taken to North America and it was from this core region in Africa that common musical features have been retained and developed in North America even if this core region in Africa is not where the numerical majority of slaves originated who were taken to North America come from. Kubik argues that the retentions from the core region he identifies are evident in the role of a common mental template that relies on a tonal centre rather than a particular scale, and that this use of a tonal centre is found in the region he identifies and in blues alongside the predominance of a pentatonic rather than a diatonic scale and the absence of the asymmetric time-lines found in Central Africa. This mental template with a tonal centre makes what gets called the blue note appear natural to Africans from this region, while appearing strange in

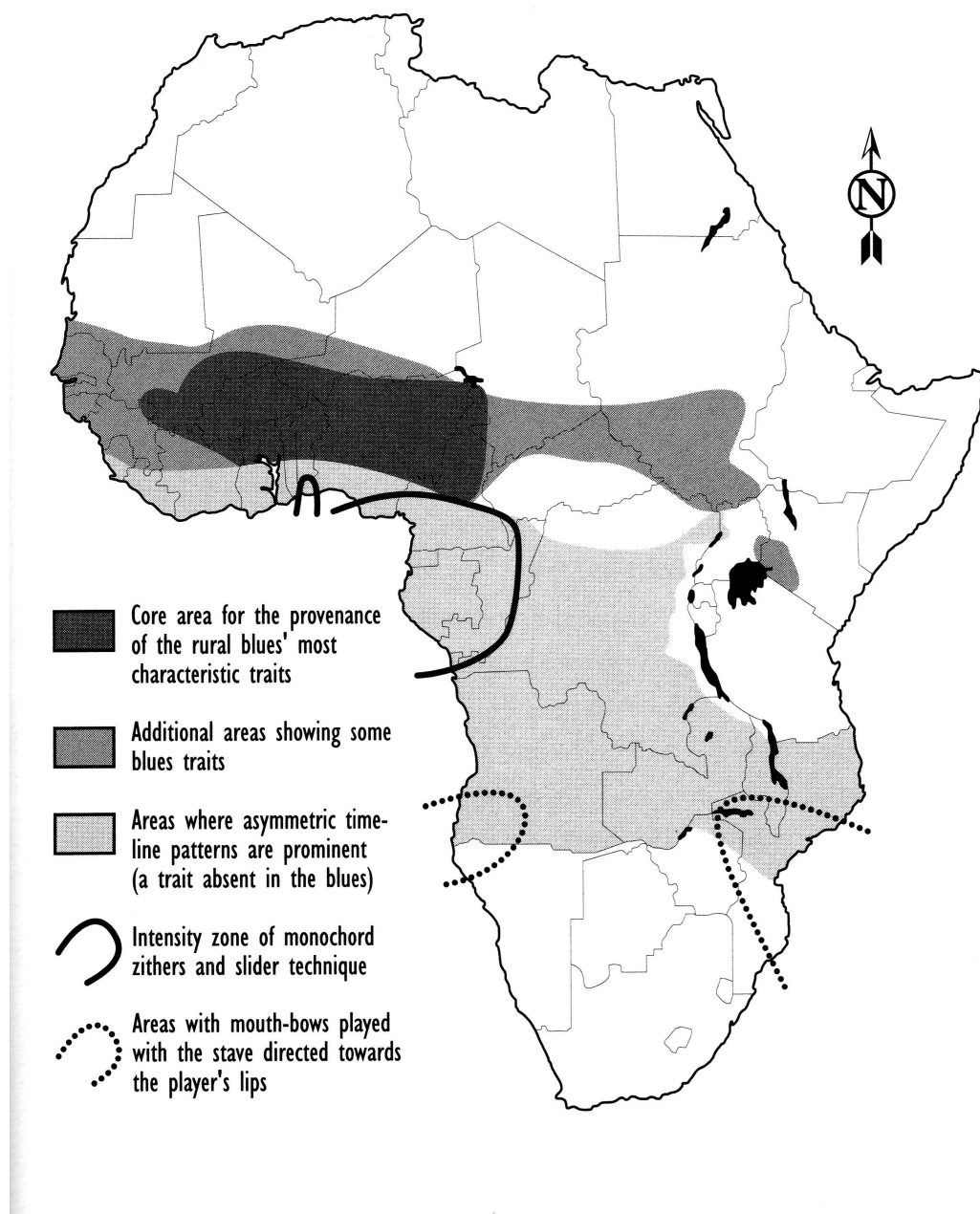
European harmony.<sup>340</sup> This argument relates Southern blues to Southern Mali and Guinea. Moving the point of this argument back to South Africa it was not Southern American blues but the jazz that evolved out of blues that took root in South Africa, a jazz which retained the features of blues mentioned.

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<sup>340</sup> *ibid.* 1999: 135-145. Kubik elaborates the point. 'My hypothesis about the origin of the blue notes, therefor postulates that many blues singers operate from a mental template (pitch memory) blending a pentatonic scale based on partials 4 to 9 with its own transposition a fifth lower. The resultant interference pattern function as an overall framework for pitch perception in the blues, with a central tonal reference note (tonic) representing the fundamental of the basic scale (C) and secondary tonal center (F). This blues scale conflicts with the Western diatonic scale and its chords particularly in two places. It also conflicts with Western functional harmony in that the dominant chord is predictably the most difficult to accomodate in the blues, while the subdominant chord can be reinterpreted as a shift from the basic tonal center on C to the secondary tonal center on F.... In all the scalar mental templates that we know from sub-Saharan Africa, the maximum number of notes within one octave is seven. This is one of the most resilient culture traits in the African and African-American culture worlds.' (*Italics in the original.*) Kubik (1999: 139-141)



FIGURE 9. African areas from where principal traits that were reconfigured in nineteenth- and twentieth-century rural Blues have originated. (Map designed by G. Kubik)



Map taken from Kubik (1999: 101 and 61)

FIGURE 7. Linguistic regions of Africa and major slave-recruiting areas ca. 1800.

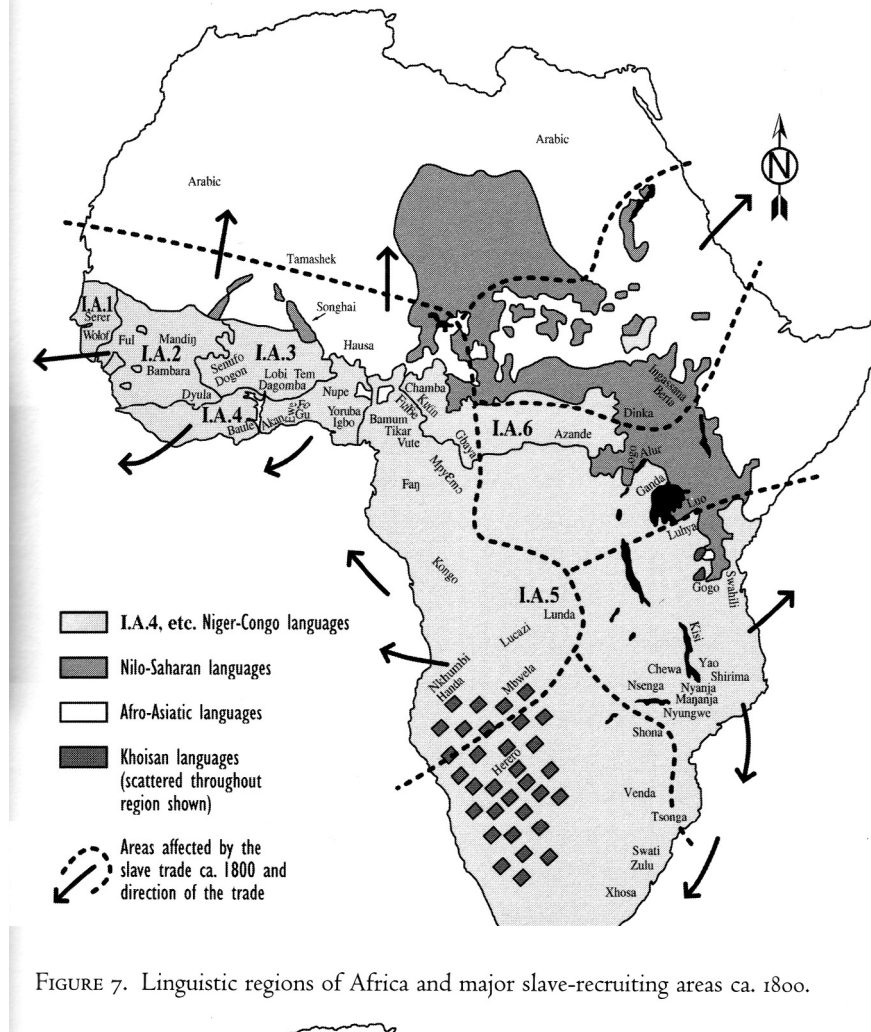


FIGURE 7. Linguistic regions of Africa and major slave-recruiting areas ca. 1800.

Returning then to jazz in the first half of the twentieth century in South Africa. For Kubik the musical link is not to be found in specific South African musical retentions because there was no slave trading in this region to the Americas. Instead Kubik turns to a different feature of pre-colonial South African music and ones it has in common with the jazz of the 1920s that followed blues – the absence of the asymmetric time-line that is prominent in Latin American music and the presence of elementary pulsation, reference beat and cycle.

Although offbeat phrasing of melodic accents is prominent in various forms of South African music, there is relatively little polyrhythm (except the 2:3 contrast inherited from Bushman music). In many areas – the Venda of Northern Transvaal excluded – there is a notable absence of drums, and much music is rooted in the experience of partials-producing instruments such as musical bows ...Although of a different genesis, South African partials based tonal systems (penta- or hexatonic) are compatible in a certain sense with U.S. African-American tonal traditions. (Kubik 1999: 163-4)

Thus Kubik is arguing that the African features of jazz of the early twentieth century that had their origin in the core region of West Africa he identifies, were features that made it better suited to the pre-existing musical traditions of South Africa than the Latin forms that have retained features from Central Africa. Jazz and gospel were appropriated and domesticated by black South Africans and became the predominant form of popular urban musical expression in a way that occurred to nothing like the same extent anywhere else in Africa, except perhaps Zimbabwe.<sup>341</sup> Thus Kubik is attempting to establish a musicological relationship that explains the attraction of Latin music back in the Congo basin and Central Africa from where critical rhythmic elements in its make up originated. Basically the West and Central African asymmetric time line principle was taken to Latin America by slaves and so the music they created in the Diaspora that used the same principle appealed at that musical level to Africans from the regions where it remained prominent in Africa when it returned. Similarly those traits in black North American music that are

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<sup>341</sup> Williams (1997) For a taste of the music listen to *Bulawayo Jazz 1950-52* on SWP Records, a company that does re-issues of Hugh Tracey recordings.

similar to those to be found in South Africa, even though this is not where slaves came from, have made the music immediately attractive.

Kubik has thus developed an over-arching explanatory historical framework at a musicological level for the flow of influences back and forth across the Atlantic. The zone he has drawn in Africa for the extent of the asymmetric time line is also coincident with the region in which the attraction of Congolese music has been strongest and this is no doubt an important factor. That said countries outside this region, in Kubik's East and Southern African regions, have fallen under the sway of Congolese music – Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania as well as Botswana and Zambia in Southern Africa for instance which sit inside the same zone as South Africa according to Kubik. Even Zimbabwe has had its Congolese bands and Congolese craze. So there must be other factors than the musicological ones established by Kubik to which we must turn to explain the enduring and dominant influence of American music in South Africa - exemplified in bands like the top two dance bands between the 1920s and 1940s, the Jazz Maniacs and the Merry Blackbirds – and the absence of a Congolese one.

## Part IV

### Chapter Nine: South Africa

The experience of Congolese musicians and the status of their music in South Africa present us with a picture that stands in sharp contrast to the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. The huge shows Congolese musicians have been staging in the national stadiums and grand hotels of South Africa's neighbours ever since the heady years after independence in the 1960s have never materialised in South Africa. Since the late 1980s, when Congolese migrants started heading for South Africa, they have not found a warm welcome. The elections that heralded the formal demise of apartheid in 1994 saw a big increase in what was already a sizeable flow of migrants from West Africa and the Congo.<sup>342</sup> Estimates for the total vary widely. This wide range of estimates is due to the fact that so many migrants remain undocumented. The large numbers and wide disparities in estimates between official statistics, academic research and popular perceptions have persisted since more migrants started arriving in South Africa from West Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries.<sup>343</sup>

The failure of Congolese musicians to make the kind of impression in South Africa that they have in all the countries just North of the border is surprising given the

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<sup>342</sup> The literature on African refugees and migrants to South Africa is substantial but that focused specifically upon the Congolese is small. The best recent research and survey of the literature on the Congolese in South Africa is that of Steinberg (2005).

<sup>343</sup> See *Mail and Guardian* 11 Sep 1998 for figures between 500,000 and 4.5 million. 'Immigrants are creating work - not taking our jobs'. Chiara Carter and Ferial Haffajee. See Klaaren, J. 2000 Post-Apartheid Citizenship in South Africa. From Migrants to Citizens: Membership in a Changing World. T. A. Aleinikoff and D. Klusmeyer. Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution Press: 221-252. The 2001 Census gives no estimates for undocumented migrants but does give a figure of 687 679 for residents born in SADC countries in South Africa.

number of migrants. Even establishing nightclubs and venues dedicated to serve this sizeable community's tastes has proved extremely difficult in South Africa. In Johannesburg and Cape Town, the two cities where the majority of the migrants are to be found, the Congolese and their nightclubs have been subject to attack from the South African state and its citizenry. To understand the South African response to the Congolese and their music the dynamic interaction of the negative force of xenophobia with the positive force of South African musical culture must be analysed. This interaction is driven by the relationship between the divisive legacy of British colonialism and apartheid and the positive and diverse cultural heritage of South Africa's many communities. There is also a third and more ambivalent force – the continuing and historic attraction of North American culture, especially African American, and its close relationship to the culture industries of global capitalism that market it. The force of South African musical cultural distinctiveness comes from being rooted both in pre-colonial musical forms and paradoxically deeply marked by the influence of African American musical culture with which it has some similarities.

## 9:2 The Historical Context

The history of apartheid and British colonialism are major factors conditioning the response of South Africans post apartheid to other Africans and their popular culture. What is distinctive about South Africa is how the patterns of white colonial rule that were established between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries, especially the social geography of state sponsored ethnic and racial segregation, endured during the period when in the rest of Africa, with some notable exceptions, there was a flowering of post-independence popular culture that was supported by independent African governments. The segregation of black and white in separate urban spaces is a common feature of colonial rule, to be found in Leopoldville, Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam in the 1950s, just as it was in Johannesburg. The well researched distinctions, as well as similarities, in the form French, and British colonial rule took, have not stopped the movement of Congolese music into Anglophone East Africa, or resulted in a stronger movement into Francophone West Africa when compared with East Africa. The end to formal segregation post-independence opened up new and prestigious urban spaces, previously white preserves, both for the evolution of forms distinctive to Kinshasa, Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam and crucially for the likes of Franco and Tabu Ley to perform in Kenya and Tanzania in the international hotels, sports stadiums and new nightclubs in the city centres in the 1960s. These spaces remained closed in South Africa until the 1990s due both to the cultural boycott and the control of those spaces by white people, for whom the voice of liberated urban Africa was not welcome. The radio waves remained as closed as the physical spaces

with none of the broadcasting from within South Africa of Congolese music that began in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia and elsewhere on the continent.

As with live performance and radio broadcast, the distribution of recorded music also remained in the hands of an industry that was white owned and was tied to the political economy of apartheid. The record company Gallo has been the most important and enduring South African owned record company but there have been other international record companies, the 'majors', who continued operating in South Africa prior to the end of apartheid.<sup>344</sup> There is an interaction in the spread of Congolese music between live, broadcast and recorded music – and all three avenues were closed to the Congolese in South Africa. The absence in South Africa of a European colonial authority from whom to wrest independence, and the presence of a far larger white settler minority willing and able to bear the military costs of imposing minority rule made the *Independence Cha Cha Cha* less directly relevant in 1960.<sup>345</sup>

South Africa's colonial experience is also distinctive. The first distinctive feature is how early a European urban presence was established in 1652 in the Cape and how the European presence grew into the largest, as a proportion of the population, of any Sub Saharan country and that this European presence was divided between two competing national groups – the British and the Dutch or Afrikaners as they came to

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<sup>344</sup> The majors are Universal, EMI, Warner and the merged Sony BMG.

<sup>345</sup> The size of the tax base provided by a developed mining industry was also absent in other colonies, even Zaire's copper mining industry. South Africa's GDP has remained consistently several times bigger than any other sub Saharan African country. South Africa 1960: \$38 billion 2000: \$133 billion 2005: \$240 billion. Nigeria: 1960: \$12 billion. 2000: \$42 billion, 2005: \$74 billion DRC: 1960: \$3.2 billion. 2000: \$4 billion 2005: \$7 billion. Figures taken from the UN statistics division. <http://unstats.un.org/> , Economist Intelligence Unit reports and World bank [http://devdata.worldbank.org/AAG/zar\\_aag.pdf](http://devdata.worldbank.org/AAG/zar_aag.pdf)



be known. The size of these populations in combination with their dominance makes South Africa distinctive and had important consequences for the development of popular culture. There is nowhere else in Sub Saharan Africa with a comparable percentage (10%) or total number (4.5 million) of white people. In Tanzania, Kenya and Zaire with fewer than 35,000 white people the numbers are tiny by comparison.<sup>346</sup> This white European population in South Africa maintained close economic and business ties with Europe right through the twentieth century and the supposed period of economic isolation under apartheid. Another crucial factor was the far larger sizes and populations of South African cities, especially when compared to those in the Belgian Congo or British East Africa. This meant there was an urban economy sizeable enough to form a market that could pay the costs of bringing the first minstrel bands, then gospel and Jazz bands to Africa from North America in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>347</sup> The Americans arrived at a time when South Africa was going through explosive urban growth following the discovery of diamonds and gold. The country's economy has remained significantly larger than that of any other African country.<sup>348</sup>

Another distinctive feature is the size and nature of the 'coloured' community in South Africa. This community developed out of the mixture of the indigenous population, imported slaves, indentured labour and the white settlers who raped them. This last element in their historic experience they have something in common with experience of African Americans. The problematic politics of the word

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<sup>346</sup> See Charles Feinstein 2005: 252- 256 for 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century white and black population statistics. See South African Census 2001 and CIA population estimates for other African countries [www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sf](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sf)

<sup>347</sup> See Chapter 3 for comparative population figures.

<sup>348</sup> See note 340.

‘coloured’ mirror the tough history of the community’s historical formation and distinction from ‘black’ South Africans. The community’s origins in slavery and the linguistic bond with their subjugators through Afrikaans help us understand why black North American music with a similar historical background has proved particularly attractive for them.<sup>349</sup> English country-dances made an appearance in the Cape by 1730, as did versions of the military marching bands in the 1830’s, after the British takeover of the Cape in 1806. A group of professional musicians evolved in the Cape, both free and slave, black and white. Between 1652 and 1830 the history of urban South African music is confined to Cape Town (Coplan 1985: 8-56).

The next phase in the development of an urban form in South Africa began with the discovery of diamonds in 1867 in Kimberley, in the Northern Cape, 350 miles North of Cape Town. Musicians travelled to Kimberley where a new interaction began with thousands of Africans, mostly Sotho, Tswana and East Africans, that flocked to work in the mines for money, some, ironically, to buy guns to fight the settlers, others to pay their taxes. According to Coplan the South African groups had little in the way of instrumental dance music or large drum ensembles.

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<sup>349</sup> I considered using the term ‘black Afrikaans speakers’ as a way to avoid the apartheid baggage of the term ‘coloured’ and because over half of Afrikaans speakers are black as in ‘coloured’. I decided this was too cumbersome, unfamiliar to readers and not the general means of self reference. ‘Black’ is the preferred term of self-reference for many categorised by the apartheid regime as ‘coloured’, at least many who vote ANC. Marlin-Curiel (2003: 72n.2) suggests using ‘Coloured’ for the apartheid era and ‘coloured’ for the post-apartheid era. Marlin-Curiel explores the post-apartheid possibilities of the common language and its expression in popular music. See also ‘What’s in the name “Coloured”’, by Martin (2001).

**Coplan** – It's a bit like Woody Allen in that film where he plays the cello in the marching band. There were only instruments you could walk with.

(Interviewed in Johannesburg 30/03/04)<sup>350</sup>

This absence of a strong drumming tradition and presence, by contrast, of a powerful vocal tradition in pre-colonial South Africa keys into subsequent influences from Europe and America. As in black America, black South African sacred and secular music has been influenced by European Christian hymn music 'and its use of functional harmony in a homophonic texture' (Carol Muller 2004: 7). It has proved a resilient and important part of the South African musical palette. Coplan goes so far as to suggest it is this connection through the Church that is the primary link between South African and American Jazz.

**Coplan** - It was not a correspondence between black American rhythms and South African. It was in the Churches, the choral connection, Christianity. Negro spirituals made a big impression here and the missionaries consciously used that. Jazz in America is based on the blues and here it's not, it's based on the Church. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 30/03/04)

Grant Olwage has provided a powerful and in depth discussion of the complicated tension between the attitudes of academics towards the influence of the musical traditions of European hymnody appropriated by black South African religious music composers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the relative weight

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<sup>350</sup> See Coplan 1985 for more on this.

given to the influence of indigenous Xhosa sources and black American spirituals in their work. Olwage (2002) is particularly critical of Veit Erlmann's rendition of the story. A more developed and empirical version of the same argument is put in Olwage's article on John Knox Bokwe (2006). Bokwe is a man who has been celebrated by Erlmann and Coplan as a proto musical nationalist hybridising European and African influences. Olwage sees a covert racialism in the work of authors like Erlmann and Coplan under the influence of a new ideological imperative within postcolonial theory to celebrate hybridity. Olwage still retains an understanding of Bokwe's work as part of the history of 'resistance' by placing it in the context of Bokwe's time, avoiding what Olwage sees as a misplaced attempt to find the African and Xhosa in his work as the necessary evidence of such 'resistance'.

Crucial to this task seems to be the direction in which Bokwe was moving: 'back' to a Xhosa past, as the postcolonial musicologist would have it, or 'forward' in the logic of progressivist modernity to which the colonial black elite largely subscribed. Bokwe's... was an ongoing project in the mastery of metropolitan forms. (Olwage 2006: 10)

A composer who fits the profile of the black South African drive to indigenise South African Christianity and its music can be found in a man who followed Bokwe – Isaiah Shembe. In Shembe's lifetime (c.1870-1935) he founded a Zionist movement that still thrives and his music has the kind of Zulu musical elements, especially in the use of dance, mixed with European hymnody, that best fit a model based on the

idea of hybridity.<sup>351</sup> Alongside the influence of European hymnody there has been a constant stream of African American sacred music that dates back to the arrival in South Africa of Jubilee Minstrel singers from America at the turn of the century. That stream from America has kept flowing. It now finds its most obvious influence in South African Gospel music. South Africans draw on the influence of their American relative while creating a distinctive national voice. The woman who is now most prominent in this field, and has been since her debut in 1988, is Rebecca Malope. Sacred music is not the main concern of this study but the distinction between secular and sacred music is not hard and fast in South Africa as the two streams have kept feeding each other since the turn of the century.<sup>352</sup> The work of a mega-star like the late Brenda Fassie is only the most recent in this pattern. Brenda Fassie repeatedly turned to sacred music for inspiration in her secular music.<sup>353</sup> Another strong influence in South Africa has been the flow of American film and its attendant music.

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<sup>351</sup> See Carol Muller (2005: 199-237) for a discussion of the European and indigenous elements in Isaiah Shembe's compositions as well as a recent survey of research on the Zionist and Nazarite Churches associated with him. For a classic of South African ethnography on Zionism and resistance see Jean Comaroff (1985), especially the summary in the conclusion pp 252-263.

<sup>352</sup> See for instance Carol Muller's (2005: 4) description of the counter flow from secular into sacred music.

<sup>353</sup> Listen for instance to *Ngohlala ngi nje* and *Vuma* on the album *Mina Nawe*. In 2005 Chicco Twala, Fassie's former musical partner, released a posthumous album of Gospel songs she recorded on CCP/EMI called *Malibongwe*.

### 9:3 The History of American Musical Influence in South Africa

‘You see it’s like we have been locked in a cave all our lives. There was one little hole in the cave. When we peeped through the only thing we could see under apartheid was America. We grew up in this country for years in that cave and everybody who peeped through that little hole could only see America’.

(Tsepo Tshola interviewed in Johannesburg 06/04/04)<sup>354</sup>

Whatever the merits of Grant Olwage’s case for the dominance in the evolution of black South African Church music in the nineteenth century by Victorian British hymnody it is not a case that can be extended to include popular urban secular music. When it comes to this field we must turn to the USA and the way its influence has blotted out any possible influence that might have come from north of the border. White musicians were wearing American influenced ‘black face’ in Cape Town as early as 1848 (Ballantine 1993: 4; Coplan 1985: 38-39). In the 1890’s the most important series of tours in South Africa by a black American company were organised. Orpheus McAdoo and the Virginia Jubilee Singers visited South Africa repeatedly and made tours of Natal and Durban alone six times in the period (Ballantine 1993: 4).<sup>355</sup> By this time vaudeville minstrels in South Africa already included a good dose of spirituals in their repertoires following the international success of Fisk Jubilee Singers. The black pianist Will P. Thompson left McAdoo’s group to live and work in Kimberley at the end of the nineteenth century. This direct

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<sup>354</sup> Tsepo Tshola is a well known South African musician.

<sup>355</sup> The role of American influence in the history of this early period in South African popular music suffuses the work of the authors already mentioned. For a succinct summary see Allingham (2006: 352-362) in Broughton, Ellingham, Trillo et al.

contact with black Americans and their music was sustained in the twentieth century inside South Africa, especially in the coastal towns of Durban and Cape Town where black American sailors were to be found. The extent of the North American's popularity can be gauged both by their commercial success in touring and by the growth of black South African imitators that had started to appear by the 1880s encouraged by the work of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) (Kubik 1999: 161). This Church was the first independent black Church in the USA. In South Africa when Mangena Makone split from the Wesleyan Church in 1892 over racial segregation and formed the first independent black South African Church, the Ethiopian Church, it was with the AME that he formed his international alliance (Muller 2005: 196). This connection also led to the first tour by an African musical group, the African Native Choir, to North America in 1893 where eight members of the group ended up staying and earning degrees with the support of the AME (Coplan 1985: 42). Each wave of black American music, apart from Southern country-blues, has found its South African counterpart. Jazz, gospel, soul, pop, house, hip-hop, rap and Rn'B all have their South African counterparts, some more distinctly South African some less.

The first distinctively black South African urban form to develop after the influence of minstrelsy and spirituals was *marabi* that appeared in the 1920s. This was the working class music of the *shebeens* where migrants to the city from every ethnic group mixed with longer-term residents. The basic chordal pattern I, IV, V that has since underpinned so much South African music was thumped out on the piano in South African 8/8 stomp time and provided the backdrop to whatever tunes

indigenous, foreign or improvised those present sang or played over the endlessly cycled pattern. Before the wartime influence of swing jazz on the upmarket black dance bands took over, the influence of *marabi* can be heard on the recordings of these bands from the mid to late 1930s.<sup>356</sup> White country has also exerted a strong attraction for black audiences – most notably the music of Jimmie Rodgers that was marketed alongside ‘Dixie Records’.



Jimmie Rogers in a Zonophone catalogue for South Africa from 1929.

The US involvement in both World Wars and the mass movement of US troops, especially black troops, brought people all over the world into direct contact with performers.<sup>357</sup> White British troops were stationed in South Africa and according to Rob Allingham, the archivist at Gallo records, it was they who brought the recordings of swing jazz with them that made their way into the black community. There is a wealth of literature on the black American influence between 1890 and

<sup>356</sup> Interview with Rob Allingham 08/04/04 Johannesburg.

<sup>357</sup> See for instance how important this direct contact was for the popularity of jazz in France in the twentieth century in William A. Shack (2001) for the Great War pp 11-47 and World War II pp 114-129 and in Jackson (2003: 13-17).



1950.<sup>358</sup> As Christopher Ballantine puts it ‘For several decades (after the 1930s), urban Africans were held in thrall by American culture – but above all by the achievements of blacks in that society. Where American culture fascinated, *black* American culture infatuated’. (Ballantine 1993: 13)

In the 1950s the South African jazz icon Hugh Masekela describes how he and his colleagues came into contact with visiting black sailors in the segregated hotels of South Africa’s port cities.

When you heard the musical *Zonk* those guys got all that from the negro jazz fans that they found when they travelled with the African revues. Even when I travelled with the African Jazz and Varieties in 1956 – Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban – as soon as we got there, Skip (Phalane) and those guys, they knew all the hotels, the boarding houses where the Negro seamen were staying. ‘Cos we could live in those hotels, like Mrs Phillips (place) in Durban’. (Ansell 2004: 49) <sup>359</sup>

This looming American presence largely blotted out cultural influence from the rest of the Diaspora in the Caribbean and Latin America, not to mention the rest of Africa, in twentieth century South Africa. The cultural boycott of apartheid was a boycott the US media largely ignored. Even the US body representing actors and musicians, the Associated Actors and Artists of America, only came around to the

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<sup>358</sup> Ballantine (1993); Coplan (1985 and 2002); Erlmann (1991. 1996. 1999); Ansell (2004); Muller (2004).

<sup>359</sup> *Zonk!* was a highly successful black comic theatrical and musical variety show put together by a white officer after World War Two using performers that had been part of the South African entertainment troupes for the soldiers at home and abroad. See David Coplan (1985: 150-2)

principles of the cultural boycott in 1981, twenty years after the British Musicians Union ban on performing in South Africa in 1961 (Ansell 2005: 181). On the other hand the front line states and the rest of Africa were active in boycotting South Africa. No Congolese bands of any note headed across the borders of the neighbouring countries in which they were so popular until 1994. This was over thirty years after the wave of Congolese music and musicians that spread across the rest of the continent around the time of Congolese independence. North American music remained the main cosmopolitan and diasporic music to influence black South Africa. This and the isolation from the rest of Africa imposed by apartheid, are probably the two most important factors in explaining the absence of South Africa from the Congolese rumba zone. There are other important factors we will come to but the history of American influence in urban South Africa is crucial to understanding black South African's relationship with Africans from the rest of Africa. Of the African Diaspora music from outside the USA only Reggae from Jamaica has been welcomed into the cultural life of black South Africa in any enduring way and that recently, by comparison, in the 1980s.

The explanation for the attraction of African American music in South Africa is not only musicological. The experience of racialised segregation and hierarchy in South Africa bears more resemblance to that which exists and existed in the USA than anything to be found in the Congo, Kenya or Tanzania. Black South Africans working in white owned farms, mines and factories in the twentieth century could identify those commonalities. The many parallels in the black American experience of social and geographic segregation and economic exploitation provided a

foundation for cultural exchange in a common experience. Pass laws, the Group Areas Act, racial segregation in public places and state education and white job reservation had their corollaries in the USA in the persistence of Jim Crow segregation in the Southern states and black ghettos in the northern cities as well as the racialised labour market where black people were relegated to work with low pay and status. The culture that sprang up, in part from resistance to that dehumanisation and exploitation, and in part from expressing the suffering it gave rise to, provided a basis for a deep bond. The political challenge posed by jazz to ethnic segregation, has its social and religious counterpart in the sentiments expressed in spirituals and gospel music - comfort in a time of oppression, the promise of eternal life, of redemptive hope and critically a common and equal humanity. The common experience of racial oppression found an outlet for expression in churches, one of the few outlets for free self-expression open to black South Africans and their American counterparts. So as with commercial jazz music the size and power of the US economy and the amount of personal social contact between black US and South African churches meant that form of expression that developed in the US became available as a cultural resource in South Africa in a way that the religious and cultural expression of Latin America that came to Leopoldville did not.

In the 1920s black American culture provided a model of urban sophistication that was made accessible for emulation by the forces of international capital with which South Africa was increasingly bound up from the time when diamonds were discovered in 1867 in Kimberley and the discovery of gold on the Reef. In the face of the racial and ethnic mythologies that the white controlled state and market

propagated in South Africa and the USA, those black jazzers cosmopolitan sophistication could be understood as a direct political challenge – representing black modernity without ethnic tags. In a music form invented and propagated by African Americans a challenge to white racist mythologies could easily be discerned. Paul Robeson was a particularly important figure for black South Africans because he articulated these thoughts clearly as well as being an international star of the thirties. He was quoted in *Bantu World* in February 1935 in preparation for a visit, not to Africa generally, but specifically to South Africa saying, ‘I am going back to my people...in the sense that for the rest of my life I am going to think and feel as an African – not as a white man...It is not as imitation Europeans, but as Africans, that we have value...’ (Ballantine 1984: 5).

Attempting to achieve emancipation by becoming Western was self-defeating, because doing so merely entrenched the dominance of the white West and its values. The jazz and spirituals black South Africans copied in the 1930s from listening to records, from sheet music and American films, as well as the odd lesson from white music teachers stood somewhere between Africa and the West, a kind of black African West, in the West but not of the West. A black American like Robeson stood out not only in espousing an Afro centrism, but also being both rich and famous. Taking this powerful black American culture and mixing it with urban South African ingredients produced a potent cocktail. As Ernest ‘Palm’ Mochumi the Jazz Maniacs trumpeter put it, ‘When we played American music mixed with *marabi* style, (the audiences) used to be crazy for it’. (Ballantine 1993: 60 from an interview in 1984)

The strongly South African style *marabi* went into decline in the late 1930s with the rise of swing jazz but one characteristic element of the style that jazz musicians attempting to escape the dominance of the US influence in the 1950s incorporated in their work, was what they called the stomp, the typical rhythm of the Zulu *indlamu*. The attempt under apartheid to build and enforce a specifically ethnic identity on all black South Africans meant black American culture provided a subversive model of a non-ethnicised and cosmopolitan blackness for South Africans. Jazz provided a living cultural alternative to that ethnicised definition of being black in South Africa that apartheid imposed in a similar way Latin music did for the Congolese in Leopoldville in the 1950s. Its successors, Rn'B, soul, funk and so on have continued to play that role. When black and white jazz musicians began to play together in the 1950s in the USA and in South Africa, jazz provided an even more overt challenge to both the ethnicised and racialised ideology and practice of social division that characterised apartheid. So black North American culture in itself provided a basis for resisting those state imposed definitions of being black or white.

What words like hybridisation cannot convey is the qualitative difference of the jazz and gospel that evolved in the churches, nightclubs and *shebeens* of urban South Africa from that in the U.S.A. The desire to emulate American jazz and gospel stars led in South Africa, to the development of musical skills in individuals in reading, composing and performing. It also led to the development of the organisational and business skills necessary to organize and market large bands. The Merry Blackbirds, the Jazz Maniacs and the first coloured band to do ballroom, the Jazz Revellers, as

well as the vaudeville acts like the Pitch Black Follies, were formed by the end of the 1920s and worked all over South Africa throughout the 1930s and early 1940s (Ballantine 1993: 11-39).

**Coplan** – They saw Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Louis Jordan playing for the Queen in these big orchestras in tuxedos on the newsreels and in movies like *Cabin in the Sky* and people would go and see things like Cab Calloway doing *Minnie the Moocher* with these immaculate outfits in the segregated cinemas for blacks, cinemas like the *Orion* ... and they thought this is for us. When they started playing jazz there was an aspirational thing about it... that was the model for black urbanism. It came from the magazines with the pictures of what to wear and the shops were selling them. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 30/03/04)

Hollywood was very important in providing an accessible and attractive version of an American modernity fully fleshed out with story lines.

- *These days with black American Rn'B videos it seems more about big cars and the gangster thing more than about white domination and you see a lot of guns and tsotsi culture in the kwaito videos.*<sup>360</sup> *What do you think about that?*

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<sup>360</sup> Tsotsi is the South African term for gangster and *kwaito* is the most recent South African musical form, using American House and Rap influences.

**Kumalo**<sup>361</sup> – I would say that the only time I could relate to that was when I was growing up in Soweto. When you were going to school there were the criminals of your age. They would steal cars and drive around spending money getting all the girls. When I look at my father he goes to work all his life and he doesn't even have a car. That sort of became a culture that you need to be cool, that you control things, this gangster thing. Another thing that helped to promote that were the films with gangsters that were popular like Al Pacino, Godfather, Scar Face. There's a lot in common there, lots of money, nice clothes and cars, women, power. You don't idolise your parents working without these things. When you are a little boy and you compare, you don't understand life. You see your father going off early in the morning and these guys are not working and they have big cars. They must be doing something right. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 30/03/04)

One of the things that made it possible for South African musicians to move towards jazz and invent their own version was their music reading skills (Ballantine 1993:35). Although what distinguishes South African jazz from that of the USA is a qualitative feel that is not to say that there aren't specific local components one can point to, a Sotho melody here, a Zulu rhythm there, a *marabi* piano style or time signature. Adding these together can't convey the overall distinctiveness, the texture of common sounds that developed in South African jazz. For instance it is how you play the chord cycle I IV V that distinguishes its use in Latin America, Europe or

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<sup>361</sup> Melvyn Kumalo is a Gallo Label manager and does AandR for 'Gospel, African (from the rest of Africa) and Neo-Traditional, Maskanda, Ndebele, Mbaqanga'. His predecessor signed Kanda Bongo Man to Gallo and Kumalo has signed a Congolese band based in Zambia doing dance music with Gospel lyrics called Lumbani Amadoda.

Africa. That can be rhythmically, by whether or not it is resolved, by associated melodies, the nature of a vocal pattern's interaction with instruments, the language being sung, indeed every element other than the use of that fundamental harmonic relationship.

The mix of the cosmopolitan and the local is a powerful cocktail in South Africa and in this it has something in common with the strength of Congolese music. But it has also given it an impervious quality to other influences from Africa. In South Africa popular music was used to reinforce all the divisions of race, of ethnicity, of town and country the apartheid regime used to maintain its rule. In this the media played an important role. In terms of popular culture Mobutu pursued a policy that was the exact opposite - through radio, television and the state patronage of public performances. The mixture of success and failure state policy met in South Africa helps explain the co-existence of pan-ethnic South African popular music with the ethnically specific music favoured by the regime. The 1950s was the great age of the Manhattan Brothers and the female divas Dorothy Rathebe, Thandi Klaasen and Miriam Makeba, and the penny whistle *kwela* boom, still influenced by swing and American vocal harmony traditions.<sup>362</sup> This coincided with the apartheid legislation of 1949 and 1950 - the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act. As the restrictions this imposed really bit in the early 1960s an exodus, especially of more avant-garde jazz musicians like Abdullah Ibrahim and Hugh Masekela in groups like the Jazz Epistles ensued.<sup>363</sup> The American influence in popular music survived their

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<sup>362</sup> Listen to tracks 8 and 9 on CD 1 for songs by these musicians that reveal the influence of North American Gospel and Swing music.

<sup>363</sup> Listen to tracks 10 and 11 on CD 1 for examples of their music where the fusing of the bebop influence with South African influences can be heard.



departure but the state patronage of African language music and radio heralded a strange divisive battle between the ethnicised music favoured by the state and a more American influenced urban music favoured by those fighting apartheid. The irony of this face-off continues to dog South African popular music. It is further complicated by the fact that in the 1970s an apolitical kind of South African soul came into being to which the state had no objection, in a similar way to the more obviously South African township jive and *mbaqanga* that preceded it in the 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>364</sup> The struggle against apartheid also produced a whole music all of its own in the form of chants used on marches and the choral music for mass gatherings and funerals. In the 1980s another South African pop form was born that has come to be known as ‘bubblegum’ which again on the surface appeared apolitical and so was tolerated by the regime. This appearance faded when the forms brightest and wildest star Brenda Fassie unleashed the song *Weekend Special* in 1983 and even more the banned album *Black President* in 1990.<sup>365</sup> The paradoxical feeling that the influence of America is very strong in South Africa but that South Africans are also fiercely nationalistic about their music is something the Congolese have experienced.

The lack of an analysis of the tension between US power and a ‘black global imagination’ as conceived by Erlmann following Gilroy, one that unites black Americans and South Africans in cultural self expression and common aspirations, is something for which he has been criticised by Scherzinger (Erlmann 1999; Scherzinger 2000). The combination of the experience of oppression, and the cultural expression of black America generally with the power of the US economy to

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<sup>364</sup> Listen to *Tsotsi* (1975) on CD 1 track 19 for an example of the evolution of *mbaqanga* by the 1970s.

<sup>365</sup> Brenda Fassie’s huge hit *Black President* is on the attached CD.

market the cultural products of that experience have together proved an unstoppable cultural force in South Africa. The commonalities between South African *kwaito* house beats and rap videos with those of the US gangster rap bands are the latest in a long line. An economic reason for this continued influence is that there are more profits for South African companies from licensing American music than there are in funding local produce let alone other African music because they don't have to finance the production or design the marketing. The imperialistic dimension to the cultural influence of the USA in South Africa might be questioned if the flow was two way but the influence of South African culture in the USA, let alone that from the rest of contemporary Africa, is still tiny by comparison judged in terms of the proportion of record sales, radio and TV airplay let alone cinema screenings.

What did not appear in South Africa in response to the inspiration of American culture was a contained and coherent popular music culture comparable to rumba and its descendants in the Congo. Given the formation of a far larger urban population as a ready market for such a form along with an organised and effective music industry this may seem surprising were it not for the ever divisive force of racial and ethnic segregation embodied in the Group Areas Act passed in 1950. This kind of segregation was ended at independence in 1960 in Kinshasa, 1962 in Kenya and 1963 in Tanzania. In South Africa it survived right through the years of post-independence creativity that flowered in the rest of Africa and from which South Africa was cut off. The Congolese musician Malcot Liwoso based in Johannesburg reveals the depth of feeling American influence in South Africa can produce in other

Africans. Malcot Liwoso was the bandleader of the only functioning Congolese band in Johannesburg at the time of writing.

**Liwoso** – I don't think the South Africans are sure of what they want to be, or who they are, or of what to be proud of. They have known great music, Miriam Makeba, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, but now they try to be like Americans as if they think Americans are better than them. How can they think that? Jazz and Blues started in Africa with the slaves, singing the songs of suffering in the fields that's how it started...They don't hear the music of Zambia, of Congo, of Morocco, Senegal but American music. So that is a very dangerous complex... You see American music on the TV here all the time, 24 hours a day. It's a nightmare. Never do you see a single clip of Congolese or Senegalese music on the TV.

(Interviewed in Johannesburg 20/03/04)

A Congolese DJ working in Johannesburg since 1998 is forthright about how derivative he feels recent South African music to be and how it blocks the acceptance of other African music.

**Vinny** - South African music is kwaito, hip-hop, *pantsula*, Rn'B, that's nearly American music you would think. So they have adopted an American style. There's no other music they would accept. They are just copying and blocking Congolese music from coming on television in up to date videos.

(Interviewed in Johannesburg 26/03/04)

The bassist for the Congolese group led by Malcot Liwoso expressed a similar sentiment.

**Motumba** - An American foreigner here has much more value to the South Africans than an African in my experience, they have far more respect for a black American.

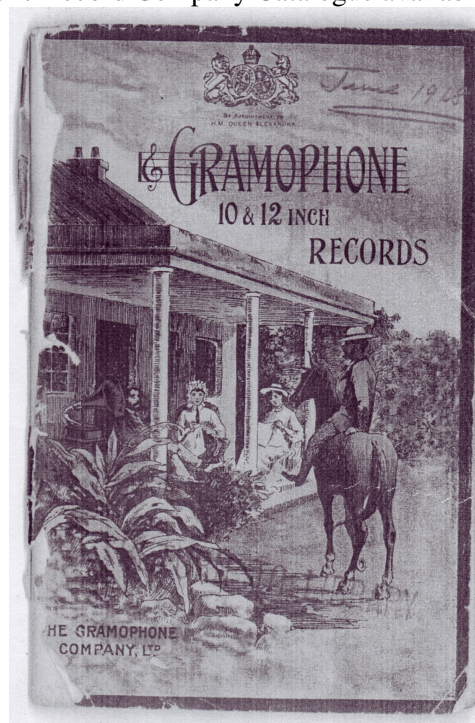
(Interviewed in Johannesburg 20/03/04)

## 9:4 The Media

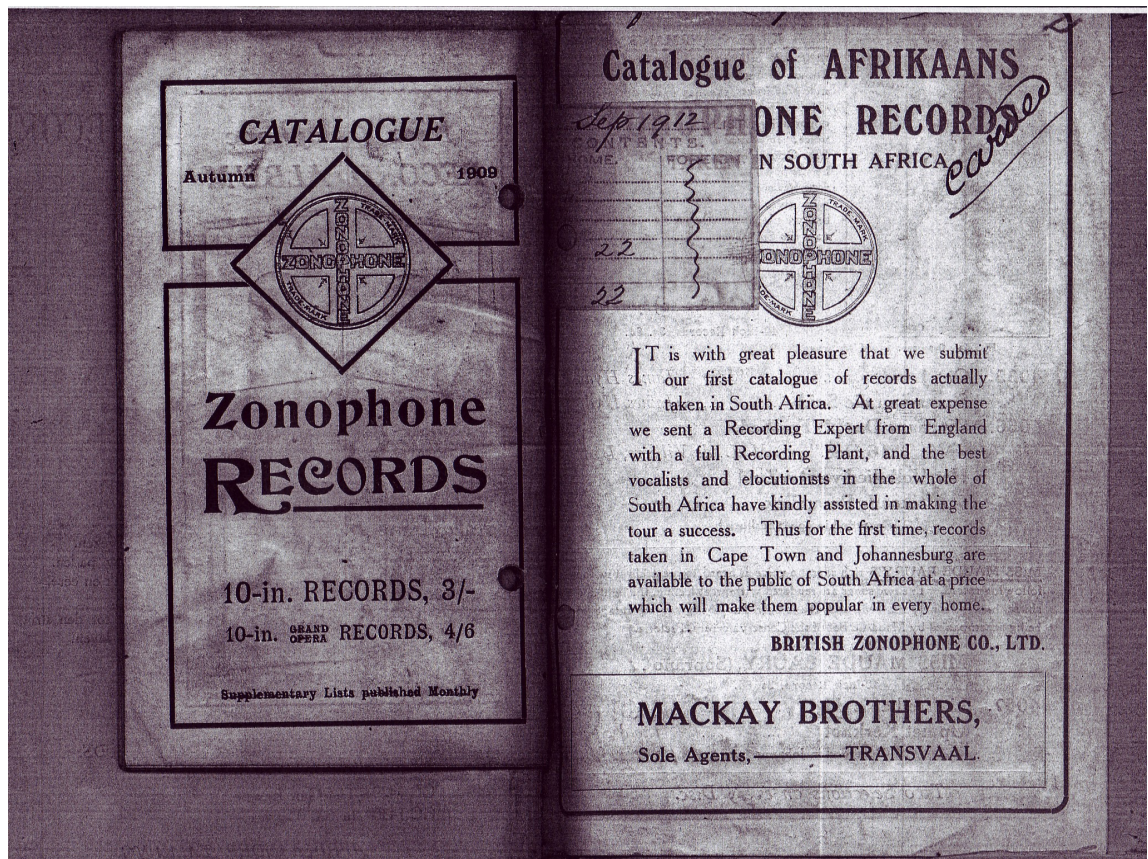
### The Recording Industry



Cover of first Gramophone Record Company Catalogue available in South Africa in 1908.







1909 South African catalogue for the Zonophone Record Company of recordings made in South Africa.

The early beginnings, relative size and white ownership of the South African recording industry combined with apartheid censorship constraints to foster the popularity of European and American music and militated against the arrival of other African music in the high period of Congolese popularity in the 1960s and 1970s. Zonophone established a South African subsidiary, as did the other majors in the 1920s. South Africa also established some important domestic competitors to the majors, most notably Gallo Records, and probably the first recording studio, record pressing plant and distribution network in Africa. Music from the US was already well established in South Africa before Africa's post World War Two flirt with Latin

music.<sup>366</sup> Rob Allingham is a fanatical collector of old South African, jazz and blues records and has produced some records based on Gallo's archives.<sup>367</sup>

**Allingham** - The influence of American music, both white and black, is older and stronger in South Africa than anywhere else in Africa through visiting American musicians, broadcasting and recorded music... For the black population this has meant largely the sale of African American music especially swing in the 1930s. It also included white country gospel. By 1952 the big band era had actually died here. All of the major record companies here had licensing links to the major record companies over-seas, primarily in the US and Britain. It was those links that provided the pipeline for all this music to come down here. In the 1960s all that English and American pop music, like the Beatles was played and was very popular. In pop music, from the 1950s onwards the conduit was the record companies who actually bought airtime on the SABC. So you would get like the Gallo hour. They all had dedicated programmes that played nothing but the latest foreign music they had licensed. For example the programme that played the Gallo hour played everything that came out on the Decca label in Britain, they got people like Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and American rock and roll. Elvis had his records released directly in South Africa by Teal who had a licensing deal with RCA. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 08/04/04)<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> A white South African ballroom dancer, Teddy van Rensburg, taught Latin-American steps to three men and three women in the Pitch Black Follies in the 1940s. Ballantine (1993: 36)

<sup>367</sup> One such record traces the history of black South African popular music. *Marabi to Disco*.

<sup>368</sup> Allingham expanded on the complicated history of mergers and splits that tied the American and British record companies so closely together and helped maintain their dominance of world sales. The full transcript of this interview will be lodged in University of Edinburgh library.

The South African owned record company that has made the most enduring impact on the history of South African music is Gallo Records. According to Allingham 80% of its revenues have come from licensing American and British music. The same was and remains true of the South African subsidiaries of the majors though this proportion is changing. The South African label Troubadour was different because they didn't have the international licensing arrangement and made their money from local music. For Gallo as far as local music went it wasn't black South African music that was important.

**Allingham** - It was Afrikaans music that sold massively from the 1930s. In 1930 Gallo made their first recording when they sent Afrikaners and Africans to the UK to record and apparently they were moderately successful. They hit pay dirt in 1934 with the Afrikaner David De Lange. He had this horrible lugubrious dirge *Waar is die Mutte?* (Where is mother?) Very untypical for him. But it sold 250,000 records. That's five times platinum...The first big African recording (1939) was *Mbube* which started selling well immediately and it remained in the catalogue for 15 years.<sup>369</sup> It must have hit 100,000 ... Al Jolson was huge in 1928. The weird thing is that the stylistic imprint of that earlier US jazz was felt in local African Jazz far after it had died in the US. The swing that you get in a production like *King Kong* in 1959 say. Earlier people like the *Jazz Maniacs* show very little US influence. A recording made in 1939 sounds pretty much *marabi*. It's

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<sup>369</sup> Listen to the original 1939 version on the attached CD track 2.



during the war that the US Jazz influence really grows. From what I've heard it is during the war that this place was awash with foreign servicemen and they brought records with them and that's when the influence really came in. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 08/04/04)

When Latin music arrived in the 1950s on the GV label, South Africa had already established a strong relationship with American music, a relationship that was never displaced by Latin or Cuban music. In the new millennium Allingham sees black urban South Africans to have been taken over by a synthesised house beat, one that has obliterated the presence of musicians from performance and recording. Guitars are notable for their absence in urban pop music. This makes the musical culture of urban South Africa post apartheid inhospitable to a musical form in which real musicians predominate, especially guitarists.

**Tshola** – Guys my age when we got to England the only thing we talked about, everything we listened too were the same things as what the people in England had listened to. They were shocked. British and American pop songs. I could sing every song of the Beatles from note to note. I know the Hollies all those songs. I even knew Jethro Tull for Gods sake. (Laughs) How could we know Africa? The top DJ's at the time came from LM radio and they were playing the OJ's, Ray Charles black American and some white American but all American.<sup>370</sup> (Interviewed in Johannesburg 06/04/04)

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<sup>370</sup> LM Radio was Radio Lorenzo Marques broadcast from Mozambique while still under Portuguese administration. The station still had a limited play list but it was broader than what could be heard on South African radio.

It has always been easy for record companies to use ready-made marketing packages from the USA. While piracy is at 70% to 95% in Africa as a whole it is estimated at 40% in South Africa so the business remains profitable in a way it is not elsewhere.<sup>371</sup>

Nigeria alone has a production capacity in its pirate replication plants of 175 million CDs a year.<sup>372</sup> The director of Downtown Studios, the main studios in Johannesburg owned by Gallo, Darryl Hielbrun, would like to see more Africans coming to South Africa to record rather than going to Europe. Despite the fact that Kanda has signed to Gallo when Wenge BCBG actually paid their own way to come to South Africa to record in their studios Gallo showed no interest in signing them.<sup>373</sup> The commercial radio DJ Nicky Blumenfield of Kaya FM sees this failure on the part of the record industry in South Africa to promote African music as something that is well entrenched and also applies to South African music.<sup>374</sup> The companies' quota for African music is taken by South African music.

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<sup>371</sup> International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI). This information is taken from the 2005 RiSA annual report quoting a regional report of the IFPI.

<sup>372</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>373</sup> Interviewed in Johannesburg 24/03/04

<sup>374</sup> Interviewed in Johannesburg 01/04/04

### 9:5 From Radio Apartheid to ‘Local is Lekker’

The policy of tribalising South African society and the diffusion of African-American popular culture were not obvious bedfellows. Nonetheless the two processes continued hand in hand under apartheid.<sup>375</sup> Radio broadcasting began in South Africa under private ownership in 1924 in Johannesburg and was exclusively in English. A short Afrikaans broadcast began in 1931. In 1936 radio was taken over by the state with the establishment of the South African Broadcasting Corporation supposedly along the lines of the BBC but remained targeted exclusively at the white population. The musicologist Hugh Tracey was hired in 1938 to make programmes in isiZulu for the Durban area. After the war radio gradually assumed greater and greater significance as a vehicle for the state policies associated with the apartheid legislation of 1950. This role was institutionalised in 1960 when Bantu Radio was established and broadcasting was expanded beyond the existing Xhosa and Zulu urban elite services to include services aimed at the urban working class and other language groups – Sotho, Tswana, Venda and Tsonga. Critically this policy was inspired by the vision of African society defined and divided by ethnicity. No isiXhosa was to be heard on Radio Zulu and vice versa.

‘Traditional’ music, strictly in one language, was the mainstay of these new vernacular radio stations. The ‘popular’ music that was allowed on air had to adhere to the same monolingual format. The simple way to adhere to this policy prescription was to record instrumental music. Penny whistle *Kwela*, sax based township ‘Jive’

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<sup>375</sup> The following is based on Muller (2005: 20-21)

and South African Jazz could all be broadcast without worries about censorship. Ethnicity was supposed to be the 'true' basis of African identity, masking the fact that this identity was something that was being imposed and defined by conquerors that had subjugated the population. Citizenship, and a national identity remained the preserve of those descended from Europeans for whom such an identity was their supposed heritage. The divisions between English and Afrikaans speakers could be overcome or overlooked. The general superiority of European society that justified white rule was central to the broadcasting aimed at Europeans. American Dixie, swing era light entertainment and European classical and Choral music was the order of the day on the European national stations. The 'coloured' population could listen to Afrikaans or English language radio. This is the exact opposite of Mobutu's radio policy in the 1960s, a policy that aimed at uniting Zairians in the use of one language, Lingala, while simultaneously valorising the diversity and depth of Zairian culture over that imposed by Europeans.<sup>376</sup>

Radio Bantu was set up in 1960. Transmission coverage expanded and improved with the use of FM in the 1960s. Black radio ownership went from 103,000 in 1960 to two million by 1968 by which time transmission was twenty-four hour (Muller 2005: 22). As migrant workers moved back and forth between town and country 'their' radio stations could be heard in both. The only significant competitor to South African state radio in the 1960s, and highly popular with both black and white audiences, was the Mozambican Lourenço Marques (LM) radio, broadcasting the European and American soul, rock and pop that was not to be heard on the SABC

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<sup>376</sup> This is not to suggest the policy did not involve both self-aggrandisement and hypocrisy.

because rock n' roll was considered immoral. Being under the Portuguese it never included any positive reporting concerning independence. The SABC took over LM radio in 1972. Despite their lack of political independence the supposedly independent 'Bantustans' of Transkei and Bophuthatswana began exercising more musical autonomy than the regime had bargained in the 1980s by including some of the American and African music not heard on SABC.<sup>377</sup> The next big change came when radio Metro started broadcasting with an almost exclusively black American format in Johannesburg in 1982.

**Allingham** – Metro was a commercial venture and strictly local to Jo'burg until 1992 when their footprint expanded to the whole of the North. I remember sales of Pedi and Sotho music plummeting within months in places like Petersburg and all the Rn'B stuff Metro were playing went through the roof. I remember people complaining and thinking if that doesn't demonstrate the power of radio I don't know what does. I went to Metro with some African music and this guy said great stuff but we can't play this we're a commercial station. Quote Unquote. i.e. 'We're a commercial station how can we possibly play music from the rest of Africa. We have to play Phili international'.

*- It's ironic that the apartheid policy keeps the ethnically specific music alive while not crushing the trans-ethnic instrumental music developing as well as mbaqanga. Once you get the 'freedom' of commercial imperatives on Radio*

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<sup>377</sup> The nominal independence of the 'Bantustans', which included Ciskei and Lebowa, was granted in 1972.

*Metro the American stuff can come in to crush out that local stuff.*

(Interviewed in Johannesburg 08/04/04)

The man best known in South Africa as the presenter of the only national programme on SABC to play music from the rest of Africa since 1994 is Richard Nwamba. His memories speak of just how isolated South Africa was musically from the rest of Africa in a period when the rest of the continent was experiencing a steady flow of Congolese music live, broadcast and recorded. Nwamba has been given some space to air other African music since 1994 by what he sees as the older generation of the ANC with their Pan African orientation, represented in the SABC by the son of Walter Sisulu, who for a period was the chief executive. Nwamba's experience is that since Sisulu's departure this space has been severely constrained by the American and English language orientation of what he sees to be the younger black 'Model C generation' now in control of the SABC and ANC cultural policy. Model C schools are those schools that were formerly exclusively white and are now favoured by black parents with aspirations for their children.

**Nwamba** – One of the reasons Congolese music did not take a hold here is that here they either played South African or Western music. Even music from nearby in Mozambique or Zimbabwe could not be heard in this country because there was no radio station to broadcast that kind of music. It was only after the so called independence of Bophuthatswana when radio Bop started broadcasting a programme called *Morubu Africa*, which means the music of Africa in seTswana. There was a DJ Magale Nafatse. He was a

pioneer literally. Africa was heard then for the first time in the early 1980s on radio Bop. It was only an hour so that wasn't enough. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 07/04/04)

Nwamba got work on a jazz show when the SABC was attempting to include more black people in 1996. Nwamba was known through his work as a playwright.

**Nwamba** – After three months I said I don't like or know anything about jazz so please fire me, let's forget about it. They said no we like what you are doing. What would you like to do? So I said you could give me a programme to play African music. They were horrified.

- *Why do you think they were horrified?*

**Nwamba** – Because it was really too black, too African from deep Africa. They'd never heard that kind of music and they thought they were going to offend their white listeners and they would lose them. I said my programme will be called the African Connection. They gave me a late night slot after 11p.m on a Sunday. The graveyard slot. They thought all conservative whites are asleep at that time so I wouldn't be offending anybody. So the way I presented the show it wasn't just playing African music but researching the origin of the music, the stories. The audience were so fascinated by those stories that the white audience wrote to SAfm saying 'we like these stories but why do you make us go to sleep so late! Give him a

better time slot'. So through the pressure of the listeners themselves I was given the current slot in 1997, which is two to three every Saturday afternoon. It was a 90% white listenership. The head of SABC Zwelakhe Sisulu, of the Sisulu family, the son of the late Walter Sisulu, was listening to my show one day and he calls me or rather his secretary and she says 'Zwelakhe Sisulu wants to speak to you'. I thought he wanted to fire me. He didn't call for a week and I intercepted him as he was leaving the SABC one day. He said 'I love what you are doing on the radio, I like the stories you are telling and I want you to do the same thing on television'. So I went from having a radio programme to having a television programme of the same name. After a few weeks I had a budget of 1.4 million rand to go abroad and get videos from around Africa and whatever I needed. We had the programme on air in 1999 we had 13 episodes. But then Zwelakhe Sisulu left the SABC and the new powers that be came in things changed. You know there is xenophobia here in South Africa actually among black people themselves, yes and some people were saying we can't allow this *kwerakwera* (South African term of abuse for African migrants) to do this.

*- But how did they take over control from Sisulu? Why did he leave?*

**Nwamba** – For a better paying job. He's now a multi-millionaire heading a black empowerment company called Nail. It's as simple as that.

Unfortunately. Those who grew up in exile and heard Nigerian and Congolese music they are the ones who are interested in Africa, but they are



a tiny minority and they have no power. There was nobody that fought for me when the African Connection was cut from SABC2.

- *Because you are not South African and your music wasn't I suppose.*

**Nwamba** – Yeah - why bother with the *kwerakwera*. (Laughs) (Interviewed in Johannesburg 07/04/04)

Another potential avenue for the Congolese has been provided in the 1990s by the growth of a few more outward looking radio stations. The presenter who is best known for including music from the rest of the continent on commercial radio in South Africa is Nicky Blumenfield. In fact, like Richard Nwamba, she is one of the only other South African broadcasters who are airing the music of the continent in South Africa. Blumenfield works for the Gauteng based youth oriented station Kaya FM that, partly because of Blumenfield, has a more diverse content than its competitors after some fierce battles with the station programmers who were sure only American music was sufficiently commercial to attract advertisers.<sup>378</sup> This same argument is a recurrent theme in the explanation cum justification for the lack of African music from outside South Africa on the radio. Sippo Sithole the manager at Gallo Records responsible for African music said this was his biggest problem in promoting the music.<sup>379</sup> The only way to break the cultural legacy of apartheid that has cut South Africa off from rest of Africa and the dominance of America is to legislate for other African content on radio it appears.

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<sup>378</sup> Interviewed in Johannesburg 01/04/04

<sup>379</sup> Interviewed in Johannesburg 06/04/04

**Sithole** - There should be an 80/20 split. 80% African 20% for the rest of the world. Then 60% of that 80% should be South African.<sup>380</sup> At the end of the day much as pressure needs to be put on the government for legislation it is us that need to be de-colonised first. If people call a radio station they are going to be asking for *Baby Face* (U2) they are not going to be saying they want to hear *Lumbani Amadoda*.<sup>381</sup> I'm not going to buy air time to advertise my product when Nigerian music is playing, the people who are going to buy this standard lamp do not listen to King Sunny Adé.<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> This suggestion implies quotas of 50% local content 30% other African and 20% for the rest of the World.

<sup>381</sup> Lumbani Amadoda are a Zambian based Congolese pop Gospel band signed by Gallo.

<sup>382</sup> Interviewed in Johannesburg 06/04/04

## **The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa**

The expansion of the commercially lucrative SABC station Metro through the use of American music that appealed to black South Africans began in the mid 1980s playing the music that had previously been the preserve of Bop and LM radio so reinforcing once again the American influence. After the elections of 1994 the commitment of the ANC to local music and the revitalisation of the single language radio stations meant a slight change in direction. The commitment to local music was not pursued through the patronage of production but through the regulation of broadcasting. The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) was established in 2000 when the previously separate regulatory bodies for broadcasting and telecommunications were merged. This body has overseen the formulation and monitored legislation that has been passed that makes all radio and television stations legally bound to broadcast a certain quota of local content, a proportion that is greater for public stations and a quota that has gradually increased since 1994.<sup>383</sup> The January 2006 regulations for radio and television require that stations broadcasting music use a minimum of 40% local content for public broadcasters, 25% for commercial broadcasters, 40% for community broadcasters and 10% for subscription broadcasters spread 'reasonably evenly' between 05h00 and 23h00.<sup>384</sup> This represents a rise of 10% for the SABC and 5% for commercial

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<sup>383</sup> The following is the legislation that is relevant to the level of the quota and ICASA's role in monitoring and enforcing it:

Independent Broadcasting Authority Act 1993 No. 153

(Section 53 Provides the basis for ICASA Regulations.)

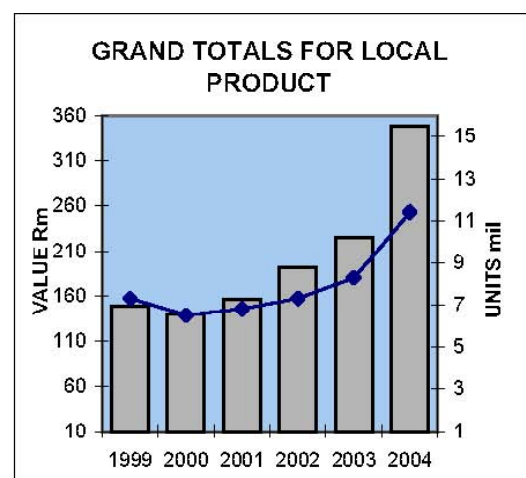
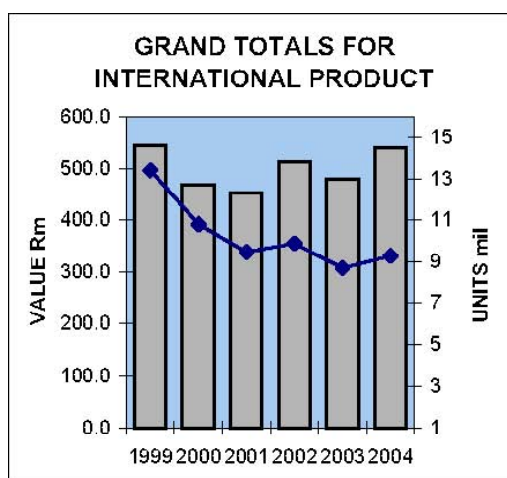
Broadcasting Act 1999 Act No. 4

22 Aug 2003 ICASA Music Content Regulations.

January 31st 2006 ICASA Music content Regulations. Government Notice 153.

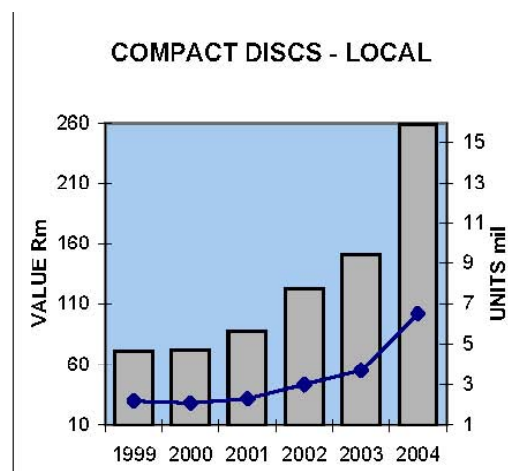
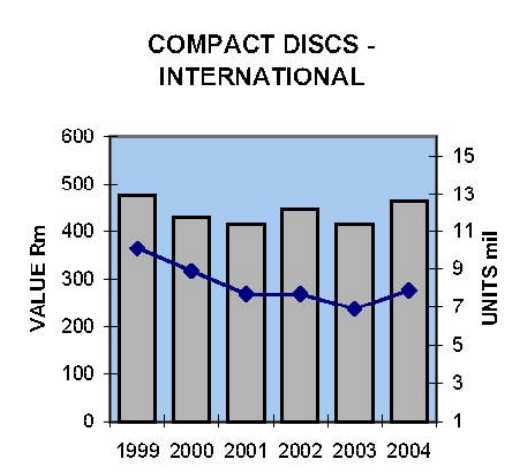
<sup>384</sup> 80% of the SABC budget actually comes from advertising and some of its stations, Metro for instance, are categorised as commercial.

stations above the level of the 1997 legislation.<sup>385</sup> The doubts expressed by the music industry about the efficacy of this regulatory approach to increasing local demand for South African music and drama, a policy dubbed ‘local is lekker’, have not been born out in terms of the ratings for South African dramas on television or in sales figures for South African music. The following graphs show the steadily increasing demand for South African music since the implementation of this policy.<sup>386</sup> These fairly dramatic increases are taken by ICASA as a vindication of their policies.



<sup>385</sup> Government Gazette 31/01/06. Vol. 487. No. 28453 p.4-5

<sup>386</sup> Graphs are taken from the Annual Report of the Recording Industry of South Africa (RiSA), the body that represents the recording industry of South Africa. 2005: 36



Although the sales of international CD's is still double that of local ones in 2005 this compares to almost ten times more in 1999. This commitment on the part of the ANC government to South African music and culture has not been extended in any practical way to include culture from the rest of the continent as a balance to the American and European content that dominates the remaining 60% for public and 75% for commercial stations once the local quota has been met. The only reference to other African music in the details of ICASA's regulatory responsibilities is as follows. 'The Authority understands the concerns of locating South Africa in Africa and of acknowledging the broadcasting of African music by South African broadcasters...The Authority is not however in a position to enforce the airing of African music or to recognise such music in its content regulations'.<sup>387</sup>

The reasons given for this are that the legislation only mandates South African content not African and 'monitoring of compliance could be difficult'. While 'recognising the need to reflect an African identity' the only practical action

<sup>387</sup> ICASA South African Content on Television and Radio: Position Paper and Regulations. 15 February 2002: 45

suggested to this end is that ‘the Authority will discuss possible reciprocal agreements with other African regulatory bodies’ and will ‘forward submissions to Parliament about the need to amend the definition of South African music to include African music’. The first stated intention has not led to any such agreements and the second does not imply that any statutory requirement for a quota of other African content be put in place either in 1997 or since in when the quota has been increased. In 2001 in the process of formulating the refinement of the functioning of the quota system fresh submissions were made to ICASA by interested parties. In these submissions the ‘majors’ and Gallo make no mention of other African music. Two small organisations that had a concern with the rise of xenophobia did. The organisation Making Music Production (MMP) in their submission stated that,

‘If we simply create mechanisms to increase South African content, and no provision is made to locate the country in Africa, damage can be done, in that stations will tend to fulfil their quotas, and thereafter, the balance of the programming will default to the international repertoire...Xenophobia is but one unfortunate result of our isolation, and, in this respect, programming of some of the excellent African content plays a critical role in ‘humanising the dehumanised’ ’. (MMP’s Local content submission to ICASA, Feb 2001)

Another organisation that actually proposed the inclusion of an African content quota was the Media Monitoring Project (MMP).

‘As an African nation we have a responsibility, not just as people but as broadcasters and big corporations and public service broadcasters. To represent Africa and

African experiences Colonialism, racism and Xenophobia, massively negative discourses surrounding Africa as a continent plagued exclusively by famine and disease and lacking culture and respect, must be challenged. We would therefore urge for African content to be promoted. Practically the way this can be done is to place an obligation on broadcasters to include at least 10% African content'. (MMP – Local content submission to ICASA 2001)

In discussion with Aynon Doyle, the Senior Policy Manager at ICASA, other reasons than those stated officially were given for how the consultative process led to the absence of any legislative commitment to other African content on the South African media when the local content quota was established in 1997 and since. Had there been such a commitment Congolese music and video clips would have had far more chance of airtime in the last ten years.

**Doyle** – During the consultation process for the ICASA regulations we did have quite a few people saying we should probably now start looking at African content rather than just South African content but the decision was made to stick with South African content because if we switch to African content the danger is that we would be totally swamped by West Africa. West Africa has a sizeable movie industry. We want our independent production sector to get to a certain level. In South Africa a lot of broadcasters could meet their quotas by buying cheap West African product.

*- Couldn't part of the foreign allowance be given to African content with a separate category?*

**Doyle** - You have to make allowance for individual station's formats. The reality is different for a classical station than a station like Kaya with a heavy African content.<sup>388</sup> While the quota for radio is 25% the reality is that most broadcast far more than that at 40%, especially the African language broadcasters.

*- It seems to me that the bulk of the 75% that is left for international music is American. There's a sentiment in the regulations in favour of African but only a tiny amount of the international music aired is African.*

**Doyle** - Another reason the mass of what they play is American is that stations are licensed on format. So Highveld couldn't suddenly start playing World Music, which I know most of the African stuff is lumped into, because they would then be regarded as being in violation of a licensing condition which gives them contemporary hits as their format. They have a specific format license. Formats have an impact on content. So there is pressure now on record companies to find South African acts because the radio stations are screaming for local content, 'go out and find us someone in our format'. Sometimes it's hard to figure out what is South African and what is American because so many of our artists put on these American

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<sup>388</sup> This 'African content' is in fact South African, a mistake often made in South Africa.



accents and follow American styles. Then the question arises is this music really South African music?

*- I saw a Congolese band playing on Ezodumo and they were seen as part of local content so I was interested to see how an immigrant community could be included in the local content category.*

**Doyle** - Well if they are South African residents then that counts. The act says a citizen or resident of the country. So that includes the Chinese or Indians. It doesn't matter what country they are from they just have to be permanent residents. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 06/06/04)

In principle this policy should leave the door open for Congolese musicians in South Africa in the way a similar policy in Tanzania did. But this is only in principle due to all the other negative factors. Baldwin Mpsi, another ICASA employee when asked the same question, gave other reasons.

**Mpsi** - So much of the African music is recorded in Europe, especially France for the West African Francophone music. So it was thought difficult to define what would be considered African music. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 06/06/04)

ICASA is interesting partly because it is the only new government body whose independence from government interference was enshrined in the 1996

constitution.<sup>389</sup> At the time of the negotiations in the early 1990s that led to democracy nobody wanted to see broadcasting controlled in the way it had been by the National Party. However that independence has not led ICASA to taking a lead on regulating to increase the level of other African content broadcast in South Africa. Some critics of ICASA see the regulations as too blunt an instrument for the diversity of South African society and station formats, a ‘one size fits all’ approach that is not sensitive to the varying capacity for local content production and desire for international content. Since 1994 the previously monolingual stations like Zulu FM, now Ukhosi FM, have changed their names and have started incorporating music and talk from other South African languages. One of the most popular presenters on Ukhosi is Linda Sibiya. Sibiya is also a presenter on the TV show *Ezodumo*. Sibiya explains how the station has changed beyond just including a variety of South African voices. He stands out as someone who, along with his producer, is keen to include the voice of migrants living in South Africa from the rest of Africa.

**Sibiya** – Ukhosi is not just for Zulus now it is for all the people in Natal, Xhosas, Sothos everyone. I do use Zulu but I do the drive time show and I mix in Sotho and Xhosa and all the languages with English or Venda and I do the same on TV. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 29/03/04)

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<sup>389</sup> The independence of ICASA as the broadcasting authority was established in the South African Constitution Chapter 9. Section 192.

## **9:6 Television: 'It shall Sound' – Ezodumo and the Anglophone zone**

The European language with which black South Africans are most familiar is English. This was a factor in the predominance of the American influence in South Africa, which many Congolese people considered important. South Africa is part of the Anglophone world in which the USA is the dominant cultural exporter of the last sixty years. Spanish may have been foreign to the Congolese but then so was English. The common tongue of the British colonial power in South Africa and the USA could be experienced as an oppressive foreign imposition on slave and colonised subject alike. However it also provided those who acquired it a medium for the sharing of their experiences. Simply put it meant millions of urban South Africans could understand films and songs from the USA whether produced by blacks or whites. So the growth of schools in South Africa was complemented in no small part by the popularity of English language film and song in the development of English as the predominant lingua franca in South Africa. This meant it was not just black American culture that had an influence. The songs and style of Jimmie Rodgers, Fred Astaire's dance routines and Glen Miller's big band arrangements came as part of the general package and were also absorbed. This has continued to be the case. For instance Dallas was hugely popular in townships and white suburbs alike during the 1970s. The attempt to impose Afrikaans as a medium for education was the spark behind the Soweto uprising of students in 1976. The use of English as a medium never had this effect.

Television broadcasting started in 1975 in South Africa. The costs of television production made it difficult to institute the kind of monolingual tribalisation policy that was adopted for radio in 1960. *Dallas*, *High Chaparral*, *The Partridge Family*, the odd British police series like *The Sweeney*, some French and German television dubbed into Afrikaans and more recently the American soap opera *The Bold and the Beautiful* filled the schedules. This diet was hardly lightened by heavy doses of South African state propaganda.<sup>390</sup> Part of this was a relentless negative representation of the rest of Africa in which the usual stereotypes of corruption and mad dictators loomed large. As one South African remembered ‘we got Idi Amin’s worst excesses in glorious technicolour’. Since 1994 there have been some notable developments - the highly acclaimed township based series *Yizo Yizo* for instance. But making local drama still costs around four times the cost of importing an American soap and imported content still looms large though now controlled by the ICASA local content regulations.<sup>391</sup>

Since 1994 the one avenue available to Congolese musicians onto South African television is strangely a programme that dates from the apartheid era called *Ezodumo*, on which popular traditional South African music is performed. It is seen with disdain by some now in authority in the SABC not according to Nwamba because of its association with apartheid’s tribalisation policies but because of a negative attitude towards the rural South African as the flip side to an adulation of all things urban and African American.

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<sup>390</sup> It appears a part of British commercial television, Thames Television, had not gone along with the 1965 decision by Equity to boycott South Africa.

<sup>391</sup> Nwamba interviewed in Johannesburg 07/04/04

Congolese musicians and promoters in South Africa complain that the South African media have been just as unfriendly to them and their music as the South African police and citizens that have closed down their nightclubs. So it was something of a surprise to find that the only Congolese musician with a functioning band in Johannesburg, Malcot Liwoso, had been given a slot on *Ezodumo*. The show is one of the oldest in South Africa and dates from the apartheid years when it was seen as a vehicle for the kind of music the state approved of. Its staple is the music that is least representative of the elite of the ANC, the neo-traditional music of the migrant workers and rural dwellers. But it also airs any secular music with a strong South African musical flavour other than youth music like *kwaito*. For instance the radical poet and musician Mzwakhe Mbuli was performing on the same show as Malcot Liwoso. Richard Nwamba described how the SABC's management saw *Ezodumo* as regressive, despite its popularity and how they attempted to close it down in 2002. An unprecedented level of public protests by its fans outside the SABC buildings in Johannesburg got the programme back on air. As with all such categorisations in South Africa there is no hermetic seal between the music of the hostels and the townships. The audience for *Ezodumo* includes black working class South Africans at many points in their physical and cultural movement between town and country and from which neo-traditional music draws its inspiration and performers. These are the musical traditions created by migrant and urban black workers, Zulu guitar and vocal music *maskanda*, and *isicathamaya*, Sotho accordion and drum music, and village bands in traditions that now draw on the incorporation of instruments and technology with which the modern is thought - electric guitars, keyboards and drum kits. It is interesting that a music like *mbaqanga*, that gravitated closer to the

urban/modern pole, where change is always 'good', should have faded while the steadfastly rural and unchanging aspects to the self representation of a genre like *maskanda* have survived and now thrive due to popular demand on the studio floor of *Ezodumo*.

*Maskanda* musicians, in partial contrast to Zulu *mbaqanga* performers such as the late Mahalathini, have not innovated in search of a wider commercial audience but in effect insisted that their audience, now expanded but still largely confined to South Africa, come to them and to what they proudly remain: parochial Zulu and proud of it, were pride to be consciously required. (Coplan 2002: 109)

*Maskanda* may have fitted happily within the ideological template laid down for African culture under apartheid and so was given the social and media space to breathe. But it should be remembered nonetheless that *maskanda* was not the creation of that regime. It was and is the creation of those workers, especially hostel dwellers and their rural compatriots, who like those uprooted from Sophiatown, have been forced to move by the system. So the flip side to the continuing importance of influence coming from the USA in the urban styles where modernity finds its expression in a drive always to change, in *kwaito*, in hip hop and rap, in gospel, in Rn'B and in South African jazz, is the importance of popular traditional forms like *maskanda* in which rapid change is shunned. This could be seen as a fractured market place but what it means is that all the markets defined by age, urbanity, ethnicity and so on are catered for and remain impervious to the attractions of

*ndombolo*. Even a form like *maskanda* has found media space to reproduce itself after apartheid in spite of the absence of the venues for live performance in the beer halls of the townships where Mahlathini blasted out *mbaqanga*.<sup>392</sup> This has meant South Africa has become home to an urban form of music that has largely disappeared from the rest of Africa. That is an urban form in which the acoustic rather than electric guitar is the dominant instrument.<sup>393</sup> The rare moment of exposure for Congolese music on South African television when Malcot Liwoso and his band appeared is instructive not only because of its rareness. The place the Congolese music is seen to occupy in the panoply of South African and foreign music is alongside what is thought of as hick untrendy ‘traditional’ music rather than in the ‘youth’ or ‘international’ categories. For those in control of the cultural agenda on the SABC this ‘traditional’ space is not one to which they have demonstrated any commitment. Indeed they have attempted to close down *Ezodumo*. They have been forced to tolerate it due to the size of the associated audience. It is dangerous to read too much into one event and although it might seem like a positive sign that the show is keen to have the (unpaid) performance of Malcot Liwoso’s band, and it is positive for those involved, the rarity of this event and the context in which the music is placed tell a story about South African perceptions of other African ‘modern’ popular music. Liwoso enlisted a group of South African women dancers and a Zulu singer in ‘traditional’ costume for the event to join the band. On his album cover he

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<sup>392</sup> Coplan’s (2002: 106) evocative description of *mbaqanga* ‘Antiphonal Zulu vocals backed by an electric guitar band and dancing to a souped up 8/8 township beat’ is best understood by listening to the 1975 song *tsotsi* by the Boyoyo Boys on the attached CD (Track 19)

<sup>393</sup> Listen to tracks 25, 26, and 27 for three examples of *maskanda* guitar music, the first of which is a fine example of how it has a close association with the gumboot dances of the mining hostels. The second two give a good idea of how *maskanda* has evolved since the demise of apartheid in the hands of two masters - Shiyani Ngcobo’s *Wayi Thathaphi* recorded in 2004 and the best known star of the genre Phuzekemisi’s song *Nginenkinga* from 2001.

has fused the Congolese and South African flags all in an attempt to break through South African nationalist resistance to the music.



Teaching the South African women the dance steps.





The band arrives at the SABC studios.



The dancers get the live studio audience fired up.



Linda Sibiya interviews Malcot.





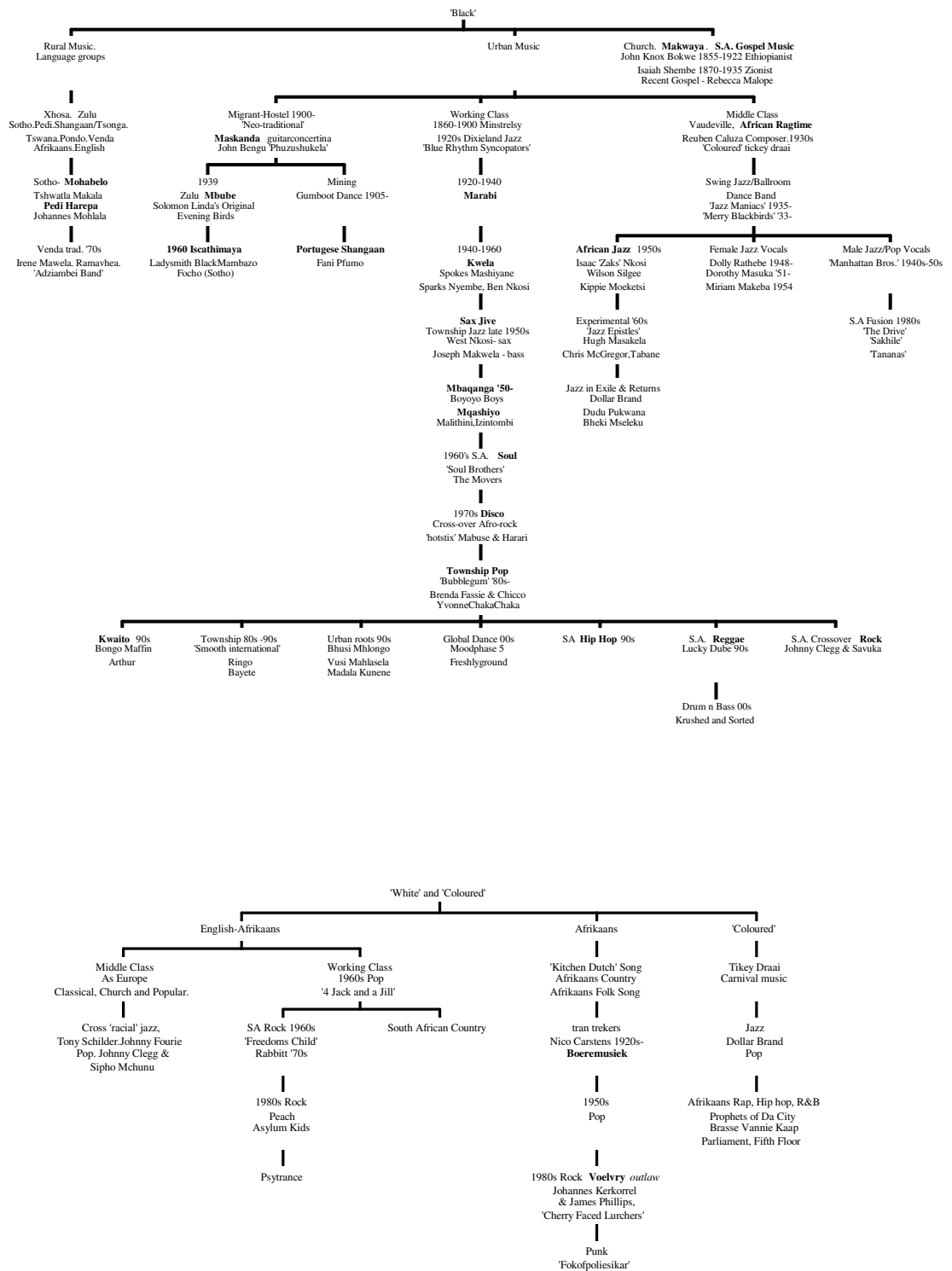
Performers dressed in ‘traditional’ Zulu costume wait to take to the stage. This is one of the core genres of *Ezodumo*. These men, who might be suspected of harbouring xenophobic feelings like so many South Africans, look on while Malcot Liwoso discusses how much he likes South African women with Linda Sibiya, one of the presenters of the show (above). The young South African women dancers he has trained to dance with Congolese male dancers wait to perform (below).



The presenters showed more interest in the Congolese musicians after the show than the South Africans. The presenter Puleng Thulo, also of the Sesotho language radio Lesedi FM, persuaded Malcot Liwoso to show her some dance moves between takes in the corridor of the studios.

## 9:7 Diversity, Fragmentation and the Exodus. Class, Race and Ethnicity

### Diagram of South African Musical Styles



The divisions of class, race and ethnicity in South Africa are central to any overview of historical ‘context’ and are the main social themes running through the substantial literature on twentieth century South Africa.<sup>394</sup> It is not just the hold of America that makes the South African market so impervious to the Congolese. It is also the co-existence and continuing popularity of so many forms of South African music, the diverse ethnic ‘rurban’ musical traditions that have evolved under the media patronage of apartheid and its tribalisation policies, the flowering of Church music and the diversity of more self avowedly non-rural traditions of the city that continue their close relationship with America that make South Africa a difficult country within which to market Congolese music. For instance in the celebrations for the ten years of independence there was *kwaito*, *maskanda*, *mbaqanga*, *isicathamiya*, *makwaya*, Gospel, pop, Sotho, Zulu and Xhosa ‘trad’, the soft afro-rock of PJ Powers, the greats of jazz including Hugh Masekela and Abdullah Ibrahim, the great female singers Dolly Rathebe, Abigail Kubheka and Sibongile Khumalo, the smooth ‘international’ or ‘world’ sounds of Jabu Khanyile and many others.

The categories used above are schematic. All the forms interact with each other and the pervasive American influence to create a strange mixture of fiercely nationalist and at the same time heavily North American influenced South African music. The rural crosses into the urban, pop into jazz, ‘coloured’ into black and so on. There are styles and genres that appeal across social categories. Never the less the point of the map is to indicate how the South African musical landscape is fragmented by a diverse set of styles, styles still divided, despite this intermingling, by the age,

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<sup>394</sup> For recent overviews of South African history see for instance Barber (1999), Beinart (2001), Ross (1999), Johnson (2004) and Worden (2000).

religion, language, class, ethnicity and the region of the performers and fans.<sup>395</sup> By contrast the Congolese have produced a cohesive and identifiable urban sound that spans the whole country regardless of social divisions. This is clearly related to the contrast in the policies of Mobutu and of the apartheid regime. In 1960 the Belgians started leaving the Congo while the sizeable European minority in South Africa policed the implementation of apartheid and white rule.<sup>396</sup>

Another contrast lies in a policy to patronise the music made in the single language group all male hostels established in towns to house migrant workers as against the pan-ethnic urban music that was favoured by Mobutu. Indeed the formal categorisation of urban dwellers into the ‘tribal’ migrant bachelor hostel dwellers, ‘semi-tribal’ urban immigrant eligible for deportation to ‘homelands’ and the ‘de-tribalised’ urban black were exclusive legal fabrications of the South African regime (Ansell 2004: 77).<sup>397</sup> Some attempt was made to re-tribalise urban residents in the 1950s through forced relocation in ethnically specified areas of new townships. This tribalisation, or re-tribalisation policy, saw the advent of a period in the late 1950s and early 1960s of anti-jazz policies. Jazz was associated with the radical nationalism of the political activists and the inherently challenging ethnic and racial mixture of its performers and audiences. The attack on jazz came in the banning of mixed bands and audiences, the closing of venues and the exile of many of its finest exponents, among them Hugh Masekela, Abdullah Ibrahim, and Miriam Makeba.

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<sup>395</sup> The fragmentation of white popular music is a subject in itself beyond the scope of this study. I have included this diagram because music in South Africa is not only African. Besides European there is also Asian and Chinese music for which there are independent radio stations.

<sup>396</sup> See the diagram for the variety of Afrikaner and English music.

<sup>397</sup> See Ansell (2004: 139) on the cultural gulf that developed between the urban youth who turned to soul in the 1970s and the musical identity hostel dwellers.

Jazz, for this period at least in the 1950s and early 1960s, came to be seen by the powers that be as a force of de-tribalisation based in immoral sexual stimulation that should be combated. Dr. Yvonne Huskisson oversaw this policy in the SABC.

‘The most thorough measures should thus be devised to combat the influence (of jazz) on the musical outlook of the African child...The answer lies in indigenous music’. (Ansell 2005: 110)

Resistance to apartheid was met with the violence of the security forces and the imposition of states of emergency in the 1960s. The music that was encouraged and broadcast, especially when Bantu radio established its thirteen language specific stations in 1960, was the music that was made popular in the hostels. The form of *mbaqanga* that passed the censors was the outwardly ‘traditional’ work of musicians like the amaZulu groaner Simon ‘Mahlathini’ Nkabinde and the Mahotella Queens. Ironically the studios called in the old jazz musicians, initially as session musicians, to play wearing the ‘tribal’ outfits in what became the seminal Makgona Tsohle Band. This made for some excellent music.<sup>398</sup> Similarly *isicathimaya* also passed the ethnic censors. Fragmentation developed that mirrored the social fragmentation fostered by apartheid. The music of resistance to those policies in the Churches, mass funeral gatherings and the political underground of the townships compounded this fragmentation. Resistance was complicated by the fact that the regime had implicated the cultural heritage of South Africans in its own divide and rule strategies. It is not surprising that urban sophisticates felt ambivalent about the music promoted by the regime. The singer Sibongile Khumalo put it this way in an

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<sup>398</sup> For a more extensive treatment of this subject see Allingham and Mthembu-Salter (2006: 356-357); Beinart (2001: 192); Meintjes (2003).

interview in 2000. 'In another way we fell into the trap. We came to look down on the people who practised traditional music, as tribalists. And that negates our identity' (Ansell 2005: 112).



## 9:8 Region, Age and Ethnicity

The gulf that developed in subsequent decades between the urban sophisticates who turned to the rebellious music of the black power movement in America and the neo-traditional music of the rural and hostel dwellers sponsored by the regime has still not disappeared in the new millennium even if the violent clashes between the ANC and Inkatha in KwaZulu-Natal have. The fragmentation of the market between the language groups sustained by the separate language based radio stations still survives. But the separate languages of the radio stations after 1960 could not stop black people in town listening to the rock and pop of LM radio or Springbok as much or more than 'their' stations. By the end of the 1960s the SABC and Yvonne Huskisson accepted this reality and performed a *volte-face*, embracing and claiming to be the voice of South African or 'Bantu' jazz. Jazz was however less popular by this point and it was the political domestication of other new more popular musical forms that assumed precedence. This meant patronising the apolitical end of the new South African soul movement that evolved modelled on its American counterpart and censoring anything radical, whether politically or sexually. The musician Pops Mohammed saw this continuing infatuation with America in the 1970s at the same time as it was related to resistance to apartheid.

The fact that it's from America, the fact that it came from abroad and the guys were black - South African guys could identify with that. They also identified with the struggles of black Americans. Maybe a bit of 'anything

that comes from America has to be good' (Interview with Pops Mohammed in Ansell 2005: 159)

This policy continued into the 1980s with the airing of similarly censored pop or 'bubblegum' as the next wave of musical evolution that occurred in isolation from the rest of Africa hit South Africa. Thus a shift occurred from a focus on imposed ethnicity and the exclusion of pan-ethnic pop forms to vigilance in the monitoring of music for covert subversion. In effect this signalled the failure of the re-tribalisation policy for the ever-growing urban audience that swelled with the labour demands of the South African economy. Owning or performing songs by banned musicians like Miriam Makeba could and did lead to 5-year jail sentences (Ansell 2005: 169). Since the democratic elections of 1994 there has been a curious continuity in these kinds of patterns even though the exiles have returned and songs of freedom are encouraged. The new American influenced urban forms *kwaito*, Rn'B, Rap and Hip-Hop co-exist with the popularity of neo-traditional forms that now find themselves, not surprisingly, out of favour with the media authorities, squeezed into smaller media spaces like the TV show *Ezodumo*.

The history of the cultural policy of the ANC since 1948 and the practices of radical artists in search of a healthy cultural nationalism have thus been caught between two forces. On the one hand there was the pressure created by the apartheid regime's use of South African linguistic and musical culture to divide and rule, whether that be amaZulu or Afrikaner. This has tainted the cultural heritage of say Zulu *maskanda* guitar playing and vocals with the brush of apartheid. On the other hand there was

what appeared to be an alternative basis for self-expression in the use of influences from America. But these influences do not constitute a basis, for cultural nationalism, for some form of indigenous national self-expression. In the 1970s radical South African bands struggled to find a national sound that bridged the divides fostered by apartheid without resorting to simple mimicry of American soul and pop while still appealing to the majority. Avant-garde jazz explorations, like the work of Philip Tabane and his band Malombo, made this journey into a national creative space beyond mimicry and imposed ethnicity. The trade union movement and the church both provided spaces in which to develop and perform music for the struggle in the 1980s and here the lines between jazz pop and choir music blurred for a while.<sup>399</sup> The beginnings of a properly national voice can be discerned evolving in this period but without access to the mainstream media when that music became too political. In the 1980s the movement to enforce a cultural boycott on South Africa gathered steam in Europe. The isolation from the rest of Africa that had long been suffered now started to extend to Europe and America and threw South African artists back on their own resources. This led to the beginnings of what looked like a new and national popular music in the music of Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Brenda Fassie with her 1984 hit *Weekend Special*, Sipho Mabuse's 1985 hit *Burnout*, Ray Phiri's band Stimela and Johnny Clegg's mixed band Savuka (later Juluka).

The influence of American music did not disappear then but a new nationalist consciousness was emerging. With the gradual demise of apartheid in the 1990s and

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<sup>399</sup> The relationship between the musical and the political struggle for emancipation from apartheid is not the central focus of any one study though the theme runs through all the major works on the relevant period. There has been a film documentary that focuses on this subject. Lee Hirsch - *Amandla! Revolution in Four Part Harmony*. Santa Monica, CA: Artisan Entertainment, 2002.

the end of the cultural boycott the doors were once again open for the mighty culture industries of the USA to get to work marketing in South Africa. In the post-apartheid era the nationalist and Africanist sentiment lacks the unifying focus of resistance to apartheid. But for the quota system regulated by ICASA the market reigns supreme. In the market place the fragmentation of all the divided social constituencies bequeathed by apartheid are now serviced by an industry hungry for market niches. The rest of Africa remains a poor runner up in this dynamic between the South African and the American. The Congolese struggle to establish a basis on which to sell their music through some form of positive and attractive identification in the way that the Americans established long ago and continue to maintain.

## 9:9 The Interaction of Class and Age

As the map of musical forms indicates, this history of fragmentation is as much to do with the class structure that came into being with industrialisation, as it is to do with ethnicity and locality. This goes back to class distinctions between the English and Afrikaners, the mission educated African population and the non-literate, those with white and blue-collar occupations and so on, distinctions that continue to operate. As the map indicates these kinds of distinctions had their musical correlates for the African population living in town in the early part of the century as they did for the Europeans. There was the ballroom dancing, American ragtime and vaudeville but most of all the choir, or *makwaya* membership for the mission educated aspirant and assimilationist middle-class and on the other side the *marabi* of the *shebeen* for the non-literate and blue collar working class African.<sup>400</sup> After 1948 such class distinctions were compromised by collective racialised repression. The day to day indignities of apartheid were brought into focus by the brutal violence of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, and by the states of emergency that followed the Soweto uprising of 1976. The trade union, UDF, and youth activism of the 1980s and the campaign to make the townships ungovernable spanned black class divisions. In fact South African jazz is the expression of the creative integration of the working class influences of *marabi* with the middle class influence of vaudeville, swing jazz, brass arrangements and music writing and reading skills.<sup>401</sup> The change in black middle class attitudes to jazz from the abhorrence in the 1920s to engagement in the

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<sup>400</sup> The story of this class history is well told by Ballantine (1993: 74-84) and on the blurring of black class boundaries in a racially segregated society (ibid: 11-12) Coplan (1985: 90-142) recounts more of this story of African class history and how it played itself out in popular culture.

<sup>401</sup> Coplan (1985: 154); Ballantine (1992: 60) and Ansell (2004: 29) all make this point.

1940s followed changes in the USA, where the same change occurred as the swing era arrived in the 1930s (Ballantine 1992: 84-85). The worst blow for the urban music of South Africa was the destruction of the creative places where these social groups mixed and a national sound was in the making. The area of Johannesburg called Sophiatown was mixed by gender, class, race and ethnicity and this was sufficient reason for the forced removal of its population, its destruction and replacement by a white suburb renamed *Triomf* (Triumph) in 1960 under the Group Areas Act. An area in Cape Town with a similar social profile called District Six met the same fate in 1966.<sup>402</sup>

This destruction of the kind of places where a national sound could develop across the now segregated social groups has not spelt the end of class distinctions however. Indeed with the development of racialised capitalism under apartheid the growth of an African middle class continued despite the ceiling that was placed on any black or coloured persons aspirations beyond a certain level. Between 1960 and 1980 the number of black professionals and white-collar workers quadrupled from 70,000 to 280,000 (Beinart 2001: 191-199). Music has and continues to play a role in reflecting class distinctions. With the end of apartheid that ceiling has been removed and de-racialised capitalism is in the making. The statistics will inevitably reflect the capacity of the white population to re-produce their class position in the way all classes do but this position no longer has the protection provided by apartheid with its segregated education and job reservation. The role of the state has changed from protecting that privilege to one of attempting to redress the historic disadvantage it

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<sup>402</sup> There is a museum dedicated to the history of District Six with a comprehensive website: [www.districtsix.co.za](http://www.districtsix.co.za) that has an interactive timeline of the relevant history.

imposed through what have been called 'black empowerment' organisations. For instance one such company called Johnnic, established under the leadership of Cyril Ramaphosa, now owns the Gallo Company. The two biggest jazz festivals are run by black owned companies – ESP Afrika and T-Musicman.<sup>403</sup> Similarly in the field of education de-segregation has opened up opportunities for class mobility amongst black and coloured people. This means a larger black middle class can now grow with people occupying social positions from which they were previously excluded. The 'cappuccino society', with a sprinkling of the black elite on the top, was the immediate outcome of democratisation but with time the cup is likely to get stirred. The musical tastes of the growing black middle class are thus divided by age because of the new experiences of de-segregated education. The young black generation that is coming through this system gets called the 'Model C' generation because aspirant parents get their children into 'Model C' schools previously the exclusive preserve of whites. Their experiences are thus very different from their parents. It is ironic that a similar division in musical taste across the generations came into being in the 1970s after the murder of Steve Biko and the 1976 Soweto uprising of the youth.

There was a generation cleavage, which the political events of 1976 widened into an abyss. The spontaneous uprising of school children against government authority that marked the beginning of the end of apartheid was also soon directed at township parents and grandparents who were accused of selling out to the system. This political judgement was extended to matters of style and taste, including music. Virtually every pre-soul genre

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<sup>403</sup> [tmusicman.co.za](http://tmusicman.co.za) and [espafrika.com](http://espafrika.com)

was now regarded by the young with suspicion, not merely for being old-fashioned but indicted as government sponsored tribal opiate'. (Allingham and Mthembu-Salter 2006: 362)

The youth of the 'Model C' generation in South Africa are still continuing to turn to American English language music as the first music of choice when it comes to any foreign influence that carries a cool or cosmopolitan connotation even if they make a plethora of versions of this music in South African languages. Thus on the national media a Congolese band like that of Malcot Liwoso finds itself bracketed in the ethnicised field of neo-traditional music on the programme *Ezodumo*, or the one specialised show dedicated to African music hosted by Richard Nwamba on national radio, far away from the 'international' and youth music on radio Metro where black American music predominates. Themba is the producer of *Ezodumo*.

- *Why do you think the American music, like Rn'B, is so dominant with the youth here?*

**Themba** – I think the Model C's and those schools have a lot of influence in that. You can hardly get an Rn'B artist who is not coming from a Model C school because it must be somebody who really understands English in that way. The Westernisation now comes through the Model C schools. If you get these Model C children together with children from the locations, the rural areas, Model C schools will just laugh at these ones from the country. ...If you speak just with a black South African accent that's no good. Even



now if we go to SABC there are people who will not even greet you because of those things, because of my accent. Absolutely. They see and dismiss you. Like with *Ezodumo* they can look down on me.

- *So if you were doing an Rn'B show...*

**Themba** – Oh it would be wow, everybody would start watching you and greeting you. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 07/04/04)

Congolese popular music thus finds itself marginalised alongside all that uncool rurally rooted South African music in the new South African media. It is only the smoother end of African 'world music' that has come out of Mali, Senegal and Cape Verde via France, Britain and Portugal that finds its way into this cosmopolitan field alongside jazz for an elite minority in South Africa. If there is one genre that continues to cross all social groups it is gospel.<sup>404</sup> The demise of apartheid has not removed the legacy of the social geography of segregation and the pernicious effects of the Group Areas Act. The townships have not seen an influx of newly poor white people.

Another feature of life in South Africa that, sadly, has survived the demise of apartheid and continues to have a negative impact on Congolese bands trying to

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<sup>404</sup> For a summary of the gospel scene see Mthembu-Salter (2006: 389-392); Muller (2004: 184-238) focuses on particular aspects of the South African Christian musical tradition based on fuller treatments she has conducted elsewhere but there is no academic book length study focussed exclusively on Gospel and sacred music generally in South Africa of the sort dedicated to Jazz. See Ansell (2005: 149-150, 195-196) for a discussion of how the sacred message of gospel has been central to the history of the political struggle in South Africa and Ansell (2005: 288) for how, since the demise of apartheid, along with choral music it has been a vehicle for a new cross racial national voice in South Africa.

make a living there, just as it does on all South African musicians, is the level of violence. Beyond municipal beer halls there have never been well-developed amenities in the townships and they are only slowly coming into being since 1994. Since the creation of the vast labour reserves in the townships in the 1960s it has been difficult to sustain clubs in the face of the level of violence as well as the difficulty in obtaining licenses from the authorities. The closing down of public spaces open to black people after 1950 in the town centres had a negative effect on all music because of the lack of suitable venues in the townships. Since the demise of apartheid it has been possible to open clubs in town centres but these are now far from the distant townships where the majority of the urban population live. Most people do not have access to the private transport necessary to go in and out of town centres from townships. Those townships that do now sustain nightclubs, like Soweto, appear threatening to Congolese musicians, who fear the attacks of the local population. The Congolese have taken up residence in areas where they feel safety in numbers nearer town centres, like Yeovil, Hillbrow and Berea in Johannesburg, or Long Street in Cape Town and Muizenberg just outside the city.

## 9:10 Glimmers of Hope

One way in which the apartheid regime did not cut South Africa off from the rest of the continent was in the exodus of artists and activists out of the country, though it did result in the loss of some of its most outward looking visionaries. Miriam Makeba moved to Guinea from the USA in 1969 at the invitation of Sékou Touré. Makeba left her mark on women like Andjelique Kidjo and the next generation of West African female singers. Hugh Masekela also made his way from exile after ten years in America to Africa in search of musical inspiration (Levine 2005).<sup>405</sup> The compositions *Angelina* and *African Market Place* were inspired by trips to Zaire. That said most South African exiles headed for Europe and America. Dudu Pukwana, Louis Moholo, Johnny Dyani and Mongezi Feza moved to London and met other Africans, especially Anglophones from Ghana and Nigeria with whom they could interact and make music.

Another exodus after 1976 that took South Africans to other African countries to be trained by the military wing of the ANC and the SACP, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK).<sup>406</sup> Nyerere allowed ANC exiles to establish their first training camps in Tanzania after the ANC was banned in 1960 and its leaders arrested in 1962. This generation of exiles, alongside many of those who moved to Europe and America in the 1960s, returned to South Africa after 1990. This small constituency are more likely to be aware of the costs to the front line states of supporting their struggle and bring the sympathies this generated with them. In Thabo Mbeki the ANC probably

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<sup>405</sup> See Ansell (2005: 232) for more on this African connection especially evident on the seminal album *Union of South Africa*.

<sup>406</sup> See Ellis (1991) on the ANC in exile.

have the leader who worked hardest to build up relations with other African countries before the end of apartheid. It has not only been the exiles that have shown themselves sympathetic and willing to break through the hostility that exists in South Africa towards African migrants. The most high profile of South Africa's pop stars is Brenda Fassie. For twenty years, until her death at the age of thirty-nine in 2004, she managed to pull off the seemingly impossible feat of bridging the divisions in South African popular music and establish herself as the nation's pop queen.<sup>407</sup> She became friendly with Congolese migrants in Hillbrow in the early 1990s when, for a brief period, there was a vogue for Congolese nightclubs and music amongst the returning exiles that identified more with Africa. When Congolese migrants arrived in greater numbers in South Africa in the early 1990s Brenda Fassie's actions broke through the divisions and xenophobia that quickly replaced the brief honeymoon. Her most public act was to make an album in 1996, *Now is the Time*, on which she recorded a duet with the Congolese star Papa Wemba on the track *Kiriya*.<sup>408</sup> Brenda Fassie began to tour Africa in the 2000s and, alongside Yvonne Chaka Chaka who was particularly successful in Nigeria, established herself on the touring circuit for big gigs. She even performed in Kinshasa in 2004 and in Brazzaville in 2003 and recorded the song *Nakupenda* (I love you) in Swahili and French on the album *Amadlozi* in 2000 for the East African audience.<sup>409</sup>

Unfortunately because of her famous unpredictability, drug taking and general wildness this association would not necessarily have challenged South African

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<sup>407</sup> See David Coplan's obituary for more on Brenda Fassie [www.afropop.org/multi/feature/ID/374/Brenda+Fassie%2C+1964-2004](http://www.afropop.org/multi/feature/ID/374/Brenda+Fassie%2C+1964-2004) and for a sense of her continental popularity see the Cameroon Tribune obituary 11/05/04.

<sup>408</sup> [www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/fassie-b.htm](http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/fassie-b.htm) for Fassie's discography.

<sup>409</sup> Listen to this song on the attached CD.

stereotypes about the migrants. This was a time when Congolese bands were still able and willing to take contracts in one of the five or six clubs that came and went in inner-city Johannesburg called *The Hillbrow Inn*, *La Quirinale*, *La Frontière*, *The Ambassador Hotel*, *The Lloyd*, and *La Rumba*. Of these only *La Rumba* still survives in 2004 as a disco but without live Congolese bands. The only other South African musician to make clear connections with the Congolese has been the *kwaito* artist Arthur. Arthur bought Congolese videos from a Congolese DJ called Vinny, learnt the dances and produced a *kwaito* album in 2000 called *kwassa kwassa* for which he made a video using Congolese dance steps.

**Vinny** – He took the dance after he bought those DVDs from me.

Mafikozolo also use Congolese dances like *Tshaku Libondas* that they took from us. There is Zombo also who uses a *Koyim Biko*.<sup>410</sup> It's Werra Son's dance. (Interviewed in Johannesburg: 26/03/04)<sup>411</sup>

Another musical bridge that may yet prove fruitful in drawing South Africans together with their fellow Africans and already has to some extent is Gospel music and the communities connected with the many Churches of South Africa in the way that it already bridges such divisions in South Africa. One of the singers, Mbhele Lorraine, in Malcot Liwoso's band is an isiZulu speaker whose tolerant attitudes have sprung from personal contact made possible by membership of a Church community have made possible.<sup>412</sup>

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<sup>410</sup> Zombo is *kwaito* star.

<sup>411</sup> Mafikolozo are a very popular young outfit that have fused *kwela* and *kwaito*.

<sup>412</sup> The positive effect of personal contact in reducing xenophobic attitudes runs as a theme through the research of the South African Migration Project (SAMP).

*- Do your friends and relatives mind you working with Congolese?*

**Lorraine** – Even myself used to be distrustful but I was invited to Libreville. I got to know them and they invited me to their church to sing and they made me feel like a queen. Before I went there I didn't understand them like they are not really people because we South Africans don't travel much. So now I accept them as my brothers and sisters. Other South Africans say they have come to take our jobs, they are bad people, and I argue with them saying they are like us, we are all Africans. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 29/03/04)

## 9:11 Xenophobia

The study of xenophobia is an important subject in understanding the South African response to the Congolese and their music. Xenophobia has been on the rise in South Africa since the demise of apartheid in 1994 and the subsequent arrival of large numbers of migrants.<sup>413</sup> This xenophobia has not been directed against white people born outside South Africa but against black Africans from the rest of the continent. Amongst these migrants there is a sizeable contingent of Congolese.<sup>414</sup> The social origin and the forces behind the movement of Congolese migrants are particular to the Congolese. However their reception in South Africa is part of a more general picture of hostility towards African migrants. That hostility is to be found in South African citizens, press and government. The 'Rainbow Nation' does not include the dark colour of African migrants. South African xenophobia is now well documented statistically and has been theorised in a sizeable academic literature.<sup>415</sup> The subject also produces a steady flow of articles in the South African press.<sup>416</sup> Though xenophobic attitudes towards black Africans are the most intense

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<sup>413</sup> Until 1986 black African nationals were not permitted to settle in South Africa outside of the 'homelands'.

<sup>414</sup> Steinberg (2005: 25) quotes a figure of 24,000 Congolese refugees in South Africa in 2003. This figure only relates to the Congolese contingent amongst the 75,000 documented refugees in South Africa, rather than the millions of undocumented migrants. MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000: 48-49) quote two estimates, 4500 and 9000, for the number of Congolese migrants entering South Africa in 1992 when the close relationship Mobutu had established with Pretoria still meant a two week visa and a three month temporary residence permit were easy to obtain and there were three direct daily flights between the capitals. In 1993 South Africa started demanding a \$1000 security deposit in Kinshasa before visas were issued meaning more Congolese migrants started to enter South Africa undocumented.

<sup>415</sup> For engaged attempts at an explanation of the factors that have contributed to the rise of xenophobic attitudes and attacks since 1994 in South Africa see Valji (2003). Another argument along the same lines can be found in Peberdy (2001) and in Bronwyn Harris (2002). For further articles on this subject see appendix 8. S. Croucher. 1998. 'South Africa's illegal aliens: constructing national boundaries in a post-apartheid state', Jonathan Klaaren. 2001 'Inside Illegality: Migration Policing in South Africa after Apartheid', LB. Landlaur and K. Jacobsen. 2004 'Refugees in the New Johannesburg'.

<sup>416</sup> For a sense of how the most liberal of the South African newspapers has covered the issue of immigration, refugees and undocumented migrants, as well as details of some of the series of

amongst white South Africans, xenophobic attacks and murders in South Africa have been perpetrated predominantly by black South Africans against black migrants. This makes the designation of racism problematic. However physiognomy, and in the case of West and Central Africans darker skin colour, are amongst the traits that are used in identifying and discriminating by black South Africans.

The Francophone Africans and Nigerians, because of their physical features, their bearing, their clothing style and their inability to speak one of the indigenous languages are generally quite distinctive and generally identifiable as the 'Other'. Local residents are usually able to pick them out instantly and scapegoat them for the woes of contemporary South African society. (Morris 1999: 317)

Jonathon Crush has co-ordinated a national survey to establish that the level of xenophobia in South Africa is not only statistically higher than anywhere else in the world but also that, although there is variation according to phenotype, region, class and gender, xenophobia is consistently higher across all these groups by comparison with other countries (Crush 2001: 14).<sup>417</sup> The abuse of migrants, and those suspected of being migrants, by immigration officials and the police are also well documented in the same study. The South African Human Rights Commission investigations revealed the behaviour of police and immigration officials towards those suspected of being 'illegal aliens'.

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xenophobic murders see the following articles in the Mail and Guardian available online.  
<http://www.mg.co.za>

For a selection of these articles see appendix 8.

<sup>417</sup> A standardised methodology has been used to establish a worldwide comparative perspective.



Arrested persons were deliberately prevented from providing accurate documents, valid identity documents were destroyed, bribes were taken for avoiding arrest or for release without documentation and processes were delayed by inefficient methods and insufficient communication between the different departments. As a consequence, many persons with valid documents were arrested. (Crush 2001:24)

This kind of practice is set against a general background of institutional incompetence in the Department of Home Affairs that contributes to ‘endemic bribery’ (Steinberg 2005: 31). A particularly shocking example of police brutality towards migrants was caught on camera in January 1998 and aired on SABC in November 2000. The incident involved six white male police officers setting dogs on three black men during a so called training exercise while indulging in a stream of xenophobic and racist abuse. As a consequence the incident played itself out in the South African media more as a ‘race’ issue than one of xenophobia. The fact that the men were from Mozambique was if anything represented as a mitigating circumstance for the police in the South African press.<sup>418</sup> However this incident mirrors the behaviour of South African citizens black and white towards black

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<sup>418</sup> For a comprehensive record of the press coverage of this event go to [www.queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources/xenophobia/press/dogattack/page1.htm](http://www.queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources/xenophobia/press/dogattack/page1.htm) Examples of the sort of headlines the event provoked:  
Paul Krik, ‘Durban dog squad slams torturer colleagues’, Daily Mail and Guardian, 17 November 2000.  
Phylcia Oppelt, ‘Brutal images that tear at the soul of the nation’, Sunday Times, 12 November 2000.  
Elias Maluleke, ‘In the jaws of racism’, City Press, 11 November 2000.  
‘Dogged by the police’, Business Day, 9 November 2000.  
‘Exposing Brutality’, Dispatch Online, 9 November 2000.  
‘The dog-squad brutes must pay’ The Star, 8 November 2000.  
Notice that no headline mentions those attacked were immigrants.

African migrants. The frequency of murders and the intensity of attacks on migrants and their businesses have steadily increased since 1994. There is no widely accepted term in isiZulu or isiXhosa for African immigrant or migrant other than the abusive term *amakwerakwera*.<sup>419</sup> Peter lives in an informal settlement, called Site 5, and discussed the familiar reasons for xenophobic attitudes and behaviour.

**Peter** - When I go for a job and I accept low pay to begin with but after a while we struggle and they give us the proper pay for the job. The Congolese will take less money. Another guy will come along looking for a job and he sees this guy working and he says 'how did he get the job and he doesn't even speak Xhosa. Has he got some *muti* or something? No man these guys are not good. They are getting underpaid but they accept it. We want a normal pay. So I hate these guys.' That is what people say and it's happening. One Congolese guy in Site 5 escaped from Jo'burg to here because people were trying to capture him. These guys are always busy... A Zulu guy from Durban said they were getting paid 50 rand an immigrant by the police and the other one said if you have brought more than 5 in a week you get extra money because you have been working hard. He was catching people in Durban. He said it was hard to catch people because they are fit and strong because they have walked a long distance coming down to South Africa. They have faced so many difficulties so they can spend 4 or 5 days without food walking 30 miles, sleeping without a bed no sense of time. They are just wandering in the forest. These things are really hard. Long

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<sup>419</sup> Interviews with residents of Site 5 near Cape Town.

time ago there was the same problem under apartheid with us running away to their countries. Now it is reversed... We take overseas as better and they take South Africa as the best in Africa. They think 'everything is happening there since Nelson Mandela took over'. Their leaders in their countries aren't helping. This is what I am thinking they are thinking.

In September 1998 two Senegalese and a Mozambican man died after being thrown from a train by black South Africans in a xenophobic attack (Valji 2003: 1). The number of xenophobic murders has gradually increased. Nahla Valji quotes Newspapers Online 2000 reporting seven such murders in one month on the Cape Flats (ibid.). In the most recent spate of attacks at the time of writing Somalis, especially shop owners have been targeted. Sixty Somalis were murdered in July and August 2006 in the Western Cape alone, mostly in the township of Khayelitsha.<sup>420</sup> Some of those murdered Somalis are reported to have had the day's takings as shopkeepers left in their pockets demonstrating that theft was not the motive.<sup>421</sup> A large number of black South African citizens have been detained on suspicion of being 'illegal aliens' because they are 'too dark'.<sup>422</sup> As Klotz puts it 'A *laager* mentality persists, although the images of what is under threat, and who comes within the protective circle of the wagons, has expanded' (Klotz. 2000: 837).

The attitudes of South Africans, black and white, to white European immigrants revealed by this same study is almost the opposite of that towards black African

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<sup>420</sup> Mail and Guardian 01/09/06. 'We Didn't Come Here to be Killed', and 'Chasing a Better Life Somalis Find Xenophobia in South Africa'.

<sup>421</sup> Migrants without citizenship cannot open bank accounts so they must keep their money themselves which has consistently made them obvious targets for robbery.

<sup>422</sup> Mail and Guardian 'Too Dark for the New South Africa'. Thokozani Mshali. 5/03/99

migrants. Although in the 2001 67% of those born outside South Africa residing in the country were from SADC countries the proportion of those born in Europe at 22% still far outstrips the 4% that were born in the rest of Africa.<sup>423</sup>

Deportation figures highlight the racial nexus of xenophobia – in the first months of 1996 26,000 individuals from Germany, the UK and the United States overstayed their visas. Yet in the whole of 1995, only 49 people from these same three Western countries were deported. (Valji 2003)

Africans from outside SADC, especially Congolese and Nigerians have been the particular object of xenophobic attitudes and targets of physical attacks and press vitriol (Crush 2001: 22). Most Congolese migrants interviewed for this study reported having been verbally abused as a foreigner while being robbed at gunpoint at least once by black South Africans. Every one had been detained on suspicion of not having legal documents more than once and had been similarly abused by police officers. Competition for jobs, using up scarce welfare resources and responsibility for increased crime were three familiar reasons they gave why black South Africans said they were unwelcoming towards them. For the Congolese who are predominantly male, well educated and under forty a fourth reason was often cited.<sup>424</sup> That reason is that they were perceived by black South African women as more respectful lovers and prone to less violence towards women and so provoked

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<sup>423</sup> About .5% of this group are white. See *Achieving a Better Life for All* 2005: 160-174 for statistics on those not born in South Africa.

<sup>424</sup> See Steinberg (2005: 26) for a reference to a 2003 survey of refugees. 'Perhaps the most striking finding of the survey is that Congolese migration to South Africa is primarily middle class, young and male'. Steinberg does warn that the survey misses those less successful migrants who remain undocumented thus weighting the survey towards the better qualified.

attacks from black men who saw them as stealing their women.<sup>425</sup> Though the Congolese may have come from the elite and hoped to pursue their careers in South Africa 29% of documented refugees found themselves unemployed in 2003 and 50% could only find work in the informal sector cutting hair, washing and guarding cars, street trading and in low paid security work (Steinberg 2005: 26). Atam suggests there is no overarching organisation for the Congolese in South Africa and that they are often reliant on money sent from home and small networks of kin in the inner city ghettos they inhabit far from the townships. They form few ties with locals. The formal entitlement to free health and primary education that was established for documented refugees in the 1998 Refugee Act are subject to the exclusionary practices of the health and education workers who frequently deny Congolese refugees along with other African migrants such access in practice.<sup>426</sup>

We can now turn to attempts that have been made at explanation.<sup>427</sup> Many of the same dynamics that have been identified in understanding the relationship between racism and migrant labour in Britain and other parts of the world can now be seen at work in South Africa. For instance the perceived competition for scarce employment and welfare resources between the British white working class and the newly arrived black working class from former colonies in Asia and the Caribbean in the 1950s and 1960s is one of the dynamics that is identified as a factor in perpetuating racism in

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<sup>425</sup> This demographic profile of Congolese migrants and the accusation of 'stealing our women' is also to be found in Steinberg. (2005: 23-37)

<sup>426</sup> 17% of refugees attempting to access emergency health care report being turned away (Steinberg 2005).

<sup>427</sup> Bronwyn Harris (2002) groups these explanations into three hypotheses – scapegoating, isolation and bio cultural hypotheses.

Britain by British writers.<sup>428</sup> In South Africa the level of unemployment, homelessness, HIV/AIDS, poverty and violence is far worse than Europe or the USA.<sup>429</sup> If both black and white South Africans socially construct black African migrants as an out-group then perceptions of competition for resources are given the added negative weight of these severe and negative experiences of deprivation and insecurity amongst black South Africans. But this competition for scarce resources does not of itself explain the process whereby those migrants are turned into a collective out-group, 'foreignised', 'othered', 'bordered' and blamed for those negative experiences rather than the rich, the white or the government. 'Several writers suggested that apartheid-era solidarities between black people of whatever national origin were crumbling even as the new, post-apartheid South African nation-building project redefined the boundaries of "us" and "them" '. (Crush 2001: 12 quoting Croucher, and Reitzes 1998). 'A previously shared and inclusive racial identity has been substituted with an exclusive national identity'. (Reitzes and Bam 2000: 87)

Nahla Valji joins a chorus of academics pointing to the role of the South African media and the Home Affairs ministry under Mangosuthu Buthelezi as playing

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<sup>428</sup> The literature on 'race' and racism in Britain is probably even bigger than that generated by interest in South Africa. See for instance Miles (1982) *Racism and Migrant Labour*. This theme is common in the literature produced by SAMP. See Crush (2001) and Peberdy (2003). For a development of a black British perspective and a critique of the Marxist productivism in Miles see Gilroy (1987: 24-27) and the development with Solomos (1989) of a more developed theorisation of 'race', racialisation and black community politics.

<sup>429</sup> For a sophisticated analysis of the 2001 Census Data to assess 'multiple deprivation', or 'unmet needs' in the fields of education, health, housing, environment and 'poverty' defined as 'the lack of resources to meet those unmet needs' see the 2006 Provincial Indices of Multiple Deprivation for South Africa 2001 available at [www.statssa.gov.za/census01/html/C2001deprivation.asp](http://www.statssa.gov.za/census01/html/C2001deprivation.asp) Unemployment was 25.6% in March 2006. HIV/AIDS stands at 18.8% of 15-49 year olds in 2005. See the South African government website for statistics in all these areas. [statsa.gov.za/](http://statsa.gov.za/) and for the 2001 Census [statsa.gov.za/census01/hm](http://statsa.gov.za/census01/hm) for the World Bank statistical profile go to <http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPPProfile.asp?SelectedCountry=ZAFandCCODE=ZAFandCNAME=South%2B AfricaandPTYPE=CP>

important roles in reinforcing and at times creating the negative stereotypes of black African migrants that led to scape-goating in the post-apartheid era (Valji 2003). The views the state and the media have contributed to forming amongst the South African public are the views they can claim they are merely reflecting. Migrants are consistently associated with disease and crime. There is little discrimination between those seeking asylum, refugees, migrants and immigrants. Both state and media frequently use a generic term 'illegal aliens' inherited from apartheid era legislation. Migrants are thus Africanised, criminalised and excluded as well as made strange and threatening. All these forms of representation serve to perpetuate rather than challenge the negative and stereotypical representation of the rest of Africa bequeathed by the media, education and state ideologues of apartheid.<sup>430</sup> How black South Africans have continued to attach negative stereotypes to other black Africans while creating a different set of representations for themselves requires further research in the manner conducted by Gilroy *et al.*

One of the ways black South Africans can escape the negative self-image that is implied by the negative representations of Africans is to think and feel South Africa and black South Africans to be different. Turning Africans from the rest of Africa into an out-group follows familiar patterns associated with banal nationalism (Billig 1995). Since 1994 the in-group in South Africa can now finally be the 'South African' citizen even if 'race', language competence, class, gender and so on continue to play important roles in structuring inequalities and social divisions. The concept of banal nationalism is useful in highlighting all the subtle ways in which a

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<sup>430</sup> See Sewpaul (2004: 8) on the results when South African students, with a majority of black students, were asked the question their thoughts on hearing the word 'African'.

sense of nationality is inculcated symbolically and linguistically by the state and national media. One of the legacies of the exploitation of black labour in industrialising South Africa and the resources this created to fund the bloated state apparatus of apartheid is a state with the resources to create a nation. Benedict Anderson's justifiably referenced masterpiece on the birth of nationalism focused on the role of print media (Anderson 1983).<sup>431</sup> The role of the media in general in the twentieth century deserves such close attention, especially, since independence in Africa, and under apartheid the role of radio.<sup>432</sup> South Africa is better able to fund the creation of a nation and the reproduction of nationalism than any of its neighbours. Late nineteenth century industrialisation, twentieth century urbanisation, the building of a functioning infrastructure, mass education, the creation of a civil service, the size of its tax base and the capacity to collect tax, and the advent of democratic government without civil war, a charismatic figure of national unity in Nelson Mandela with an unrivalled international reputation and a mature political party committed to national unity all now play their roles. Billig's insight into the quiet ways of banal nationalism is an attempt to demonstrate that a distinction such as that between 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalism obscures how the forces of 'cold' and 'hot' nationalism fade into each other at the point where an in-group and an out-group are defined and that in reality the nation is always defined through the construction of out-groups or those placed outside the nation. The absence of 'hot' ethnic nationalist rhetoric from the ANC has not stopped the insidious legacy of a racist and colonial teaching about Africans combining with a

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<sup>431</sup> See Giddens (1985) on the monopoly of violence and Gellner (1983) on the creation of an independent civil service for complementary theses on the evolution of the nation state.

<sup>432</sup> See Muller (2004: 19-25) on the role of radio in buttressing the tribalisation of South African society under apartheid.



new and vital pride in a South Africa liberated from apartheid to produce xenophobia.

The critique from the left in South Africa is that the elite of the ANC has made a pact with white economic interests such that redistribution to address entrenched inequality is off the agenda (Valji 2003). In this analysis African migrants come to act as a scapegoat for the absence for the majority of black South Africans of the economic fruits the redistribution the left would like to see. Jeremy Cronin draws the nature of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) into this kind of analysis. He focuses on how the TRC foregrounded the acts of individuals and pushed the systemic brutality and inequality of the apartheid system into the background. He sees this as part of an ANC nation-building project in which the TRC played its part. By adopting a narrow legalistic definition of what constitutes a gross violation of human rights that focused on individual violators the TRC turned all South Africans into both victims and perpetrators, creating a moral equivalence between armed resistance to and the brutal imposition of apartheid. He sees this as driven by the desire to fabricate a nationalist history that draws all South Africans together. Allotting collective responsibility to white people is a threat to that nationalist project. There is also an unwillingness to focus on the role the international community played in perpetuating apartheid, especially the economic community into which the ANC now wishes South Africa to fit (Cronin 1999: 7). 'Looking at the guilt and suffering of the past, one cannot but conclude: In a certain sense all of us are victims of apartheid, all of us are victims of our past. Mandela at the inauguration of the TRC'. (Meiring 2000: 196 quoted in Valji 2003)

Valji looks at how the nationalist project is seen by the ANC as a route to overcoming not only divisions between ‘racial’ groups but all the other ethnic and regional divisions fostered under apartheid, a sugar coated nationalist rainbowism that exacerbates xenophobia while masking the need for structural transformation. The unifying rainbow nation deracializes insiders but projects the outsider as African and black. Nahla Valji recognises that the nation-building project only plays this role in contributing to xenophobia as it interacts with other factors – resource competition and poverty, the media representations and increased levels of migration. Exclusionary nationalism is also a powerful global ideology on which South Africa is drawing. All of these factors are conducive to xenophobia. But he holds the ANC to account for being at risk of ‘...not forging a 'real transformation', (but taking) the short or facile route to a forged national identity (that) will only exhibit the worst excesses of what we know are the consequences of manipulated and constructed nationalism – the rise of xenophobia’. (Valji 2003)

For Coplan ‘blacks think they are merely protecting their country. They didn’t free this country from the whites to give it to these fuckers’.<sup>433</sup> The fact that the Congolese, unlike migrants from SADC countries, combine distinctive physical features and do not speak any South African language makes them particularly vulnerable to being targeted and serves to isolate them from black South Africans - more than say Shangaan or Ndebele speakers. But Congolese musicians have also found success and a warm welcome over the years in many parts of Africa with

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<sup>433</sup> Interviewed in Johannesburg: 03/03/04

which they have no language in common, like Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria whether as residents or on tour, even though strong local musical forms have always predominated in Ghana and Nigeria. In East Africa, as in the rest of Africa, Lingala has been the language in which the music has first achieved popularity, despite the use of a common lingua franca Swahili in Eastern Congo as in East Africa. The commonly used derogatory term that perhaps best sums up widespread attitudes to other Africans in South Africa is *amakwerakwera*. Congolese migrants, like other African migrants, have had to come to terms with the common experience of being referred too in this way in South Africa.

**Hielbrun<sup>434</sup>** - The guys like the Nigerians are causing havoc in this country. Crime and drugs. In Hillbrow here and Sea Point down in Cape Town they've taken over and created a drug haven. We need to clamp down on foreigners. We just have to. We have to become as strict as the Americans and the British are. I think we should start to control our borders with the SADF. They have to be armed. They just have to have big trucks, holding areas and deport them... I don't believe our government is doing enough end of story. I feel very strongly about that. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 24/03/04)

Mthembu-Salter felt a big problem in South Africa is the use of apartheid style policing that is now used when dealing with suspected 'illegals' in raids, redolent of the pass raids, on areas of Johannesburg that have become ghettos. In Cape Town

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<sup>434</sup> Darryl Hielbrun is the Manager of Downtown Studios, the largest recording studio in South Africa. The studio is owned by Gallo Records.

tension is exacerbated by the fact that the victory of 1994 saw the end of job reservation and black people were finally permitted to work legally in the region. Their former role in the grey economy undercutting the wage bargaining position of legal coloured workers, which produced tension between the communities, is one now filled by the new migrants.

## 9:12 The *Amakwerakwera*. Congolese Experiences and Understanding of Xenophobia

Obviously the Congolese perception of their place in South African society is somewhat different from those intent on attacking and deporting them. The verbal and physical attacks are something the Congolese have to find ways of coping with.

**Onda**<sup>435</sup> - I have a friend here who was angry because they were calling him *amakwerakwera*. I thought it meant foreigner. He told me it meant somebody who can't speak their language. That's not good. So then I understood. I was attacked by black South Africans in Hillbrow. They said nothing they just took everything. Two grabbed my arms; two stripped me of my phone, money and so on. I didn't go to the police what good would that do? (Interviewed in Johannesburg 18/03/04)

Dolus Motumba, a Congolese bassist living in Cape Town was completely dismissive of people who expressed xenophobia towards him in South Africa.

- *Have you experienced xenophobic verbal abuse?*

**Motumba** - Oh yes that is very common everywhere in South Africa. That is not specific for the Congolese but all foreigners. They say you are *kwerakwera*, you don't belong here you come from elsewhere, go back.

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<sup>435</sup> Arcel Onda is a presenter for Congolese Raga TV working in South Africa at the time of writing.

*- How do you respond to that?*

**Motumba** - One replies to imbeciles with silence. Why start a relationship with an imbecile? It shows they have a weak spirit.

*- Why do you think South Africans are like that?*

**Motumba** - It all comes from apartheid. South Africans for the most part, blacks and coloured, are not well educated. It is also jealousy of people who dress well, who can hold a conversation. (Interviewed in Cape Town 04/05/04)

It is by no means only verbal attacks the Congolese suffer. With the level of violence in the areas where the Congolese live in Johannesburg higher than in Cape Town the frequency with which Congolese migrants experience attacks there is probably higher. Malcot Liwoso had this to say on the subject.

*- Have you ever been attacked?*

**Liwoso** – Yes three times with guns and knives.

*- Did they know you were not from here?*

**Liwoso** – They can tell from my morphology. When they see that they don't make a mistake. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 20/03/04)

The way looks, not just morphology, but clothes and bearing can give away your origins means the Congolese do not feel free to dress in the manner many would like to. The manager, David Kidicho, of *Kin Malebo* a Congolese restaurant in Yeoville had this to say. 'Here it's not easy. Because if you go out as a Congolese well dressed you will be attacked. It's better to dress like the other people here'.<sup>436</sup>

Somebody who has thought hard about this subject and hears the stories of many African migrants on the subject of xenophobia is Ntone Ediabe the manager of the African market in central Cape Town who arrived in 1993. At first he experienced no problems. He sees the violence towards foreigners as part of a familiar pattern following the unfulfilled expectations of independence leading to the scapegoating of migrants. Ediabe went on to describe how it is not the professionals but the migrants who work as street traders that bear the brunt of the physical and verbal attacks. For him what he suffers as a professional is different.

**Ediabe** - Say I went to this dinner party once, university lecturers, one from Ivory Coast one from Nigeria, and then when they find themselves in those circles, with South Africans – black, white, yellow, green - this exotica thing comes up – 'oh it's like I've got a Nigerian friend, but a Nigerian friend who can speak English, who has a degree, who has a PhD who can tell us some nice stories over dinner', it's like a coffee table book thing. At the working

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<sup>436</sup> Interviewed in Yeoville Johannesburg 18/03/04

class level I actually very seldom experience that exotica. People will play on each other; those Senegalese will try and speak a bit of Zulu, a bit of Xhosa. There's almost this common thing at this market. (Interviewed in Cape Town 28/06/02)

There is a sharp contrast though between exoticisation and the verbal abuse and physical violence experienced by street traders and those Congolese migrants who have tried to live in the townships in working class areas. Interestingly though when friendships and contact is established in a safer environment like that provided by the African market in Cape Town, then at this level Ediabe feels the relationships are more genuine and relaxed.



### 9:13 Gender and Xenophobia

One of the under researched areas of the migrant experience in South Africa but one that nonetheless often came up in discussions with Congolese migrants is the relationship between the predominantly male migrants and South African women. Steinberg identifies this relationship as the strongest of the links between the Congolese migrants and the host society but also a relationship that has not been properly explored.<sup>437</sup> This is indeed a relationship Congolese musicians feel can help them musically as well as socially. They see South African women as more favourably disposed to them than South African men and as such one of the few avenues open to them into South African society. Musicians include them as singers and dancers and hope to appeal to them as fans. Since Kanda Bongo Man signed to Gallo in 1994 as the rare exception to the absence of a Congolese musical presence in South Africa he has recorded an album *Swalati* that includes the vocal harmonies of South African women for instance. Similarly the only local Congolese band based in South Africa that has recorded an album in South Africa headed by Malcot Liwoso has included the voices of South African women and taught women dancers Congolese dance routines to perform on television. The perceptions of this relationship are somewhat different for the South Africans and the Congolese. Unfortunately that relationship is as much a source of xenophobic antagonism expressed by South African men towards Congolese men seen to be ‘stealing’ South African women as it is a positive source of connection.

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<sup>437</sup> Jonny Steinberg 2005: 28 ‘In the context of the extreme frailty of Atam’s respondents’ ties with outsiders, sexual relationships with South Africans must surely count as the most valuable and substantial contact between refugees and locals. Unfortunately, this question is left unexplored’.

When Malcot Liwoso was interviewed on *Ezodumo* he made a point of saying how beautiful South African ‘babes’ are. The producer of the show informed me he would cut that portion of the interview for fear of exacerbating xenophobia. Crystal Orderson, a young SABC presenter with some personal experience described what it is that makes Congolese men attractive.

**Orderson** - The courtship is the most amazing. It’s like you’re the queen. Then after that it’s jealousy. That’s the painful part recognising that. In the courtship phase it’s amazing. Like champagne for everybody. Decadence. Which is great. Dancing. Really cool. Our local guys are pretty fucked up. Local men do do that courtship thing but when you’re socialising you’re like scum. (Interviewed in Cape Town 26/04/04).<sup>438</sup>

### **Congolese Perceptions.**

The Congolese men interviewed for this study were unsurprisingly well aware of the attraction they were able to generate in South African women. The manager of a popular Congolese restaurant in Yeoville, Mr. Kidicho gave his explanation of this attraction and why it is that he employs South African women rather than men.

**Kidicho** - We have mainly South African women working here. The South African men are more suspicious of us so it’s harder to find male workers.

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<sup>438</sup> Crystal grew up in the ‘coloured’ township of Athlone on Mitchell’s Plain near Cape Town.

It's mainly South African women not men who go to our clubs as well. Here the men beat the women with us it's more tender more romantic. The women here like that. Listen to our music it's romantic. (Interviewed in Yeoville, Johannesburg 18/03/04)

Ntone Ediabe had a developed understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between African migrants and South African women because many work with migrant men in the market that he manages.

**Ediabe** - Local women seem to be far more open to meet immigrants than the male population. The male population always feel far more threatened. I think there's a sexual thing going on. If the status of the black man in this country is at the same level or even below what the main stream has for animal life - I mean imagine what it's like for a black woman. Black men here are struggling so hard to get out of where they find themselves. It means that the relationship to women is very violent, it's very aggressive.

- *Crystal (Orderson) was saying that the Congolese men are more romantic.*

**Ediabe** - ...It goes beyond the local relationship. I mean these women get treated *like women*. They get all these things that there's no space for in local relationships. I see it happen here all the time. (Interviewed in Cape Town 28/06/02)

## 9:14 The Clubs and the Ghettos. Chez Ntemba and Frankys



The *Chez Ntemba* nightclub in Johannesburg.

Live performance has always been the lifeblood of Congolese music. Live performance has sustained Congolese music all over the continent as the necessary compliment to broadcasting, records, cassettes and CDs. With the demise of apartheid and the arrival of significant numbers of Congolese migrants in South Africa live performance, even if initially primarily for the migrant African population, could have been the way the music found its way into South Africa. In South Africa for a short while in the early 1990s a small group of nightclubs catering to the migrant population and with live Congolese bands did appear in Johannesburg. By 2004 there was no club in Johannesburg with regular live Congolese music

though the population of Congolese and other African migrants had grown substantially. The only two clubs even playing the music were the small middle class venue *Sankayi* in a shopping mall called Rosebank in a predominantly white area and a more significant and substantial club called *Chez Ntemba*.

The brief rise and subsequent demise of the Congolese club scene in South Africa not only helps explain the continued lack of a significant Congolese musical presence, but also how South African xenophobia has played itself out in practice to prevent the evolution of some new hybrid form. The clubs closed because of the violence of state and citizenry towards African migrants and the attack on any small presence they managed to establish in the inner city areas to which they moved. In Johannesburg this was in an area called Hillbrow where the Congolese have congregated in Johannesburg, an area always at the forefront of social change in South Africa, where the first substantial mixing of Indian, coloured, black and white residents occurred in the city.<sup>439</sup>

Hillbrow has a place in the consciousness of people from Johannesburg as being where the social geography of apartheid, segregating white and black residency, first started breaking down. Since the end of apartheid it has continued to play this role, playing host to the wave of migrants from across the continent, especially Nigerians and Congolese. Many Congolese people said it is now too dangerous for them.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> See Morris (1999) for a well-researched history of the area. Between 1970 and 1990 the area went from being almost 100% white to being around 20% white during a period when the Group Areas Act made black residents of the area officially illegal. *ibid*: ix

<sup>440</sup> See Morris (1999: 311-328) on the Congolese and Nigerians in Hillbrow.

To most South Africans, especially those who have never visited Hillbrow, the place distils in one small, overpopulated neighbourhood the entire spectrum of the country's vices: drugs, gangs, prostitutes, illegal immigrants, squalor, strip joints, and a mugger at every street corner. To those who actually live there, Hillbrow symbolises freedom, opportunity, homes, schools, jobs, a safe haven for those who have fled from places far worse.

(Silverman 21/12/1999 *Mail and Guardian*)

Yeoville has gone through a similar transformation. Yeoville was predominantly white in 1990 and is now at least 90% black. There is hardly a single white or Asian face on the main street – Rockey Street. The black population on the streets talk in many different African languages.<sup>441</sup> The reasons musicians and club managers gave for the decline of the clubs was the raids by the police in the supposed search for drugs. The second reason was the lack of security in Hillbrow, which meant musicians, and customers were frequently attacked and robbed at gunpoint outside the clubs late at night. The story of *Chez Ntemba* is representative of the experiences of clubs in Hillbrow but unlike others its owner had the resources to relocate and survive.

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<sup>441</sup> For two contrary views of the transformation of Yeoville see Rian Malan's article in the *Fairlady* April 2004 and the blog posted by a white South African too scared to get out of his car while photographing the decline of the area. <http://deathofjohannesburg.blogspot.com/2006/07/visit-to-yeoville.html> The site also gives a good idea of how white South Africans feel about the change to the area.

## **Chez Ntemba**

Until *Chez Ntemba* was forced out of Hillbrow it was the club to which ordinary Congolese, South Africans and other African immigrants went in large numbers. The club moved to Bruma, which is safer but more expensive, from its original location in the now distinctly dangerous part of town that Hillbrow is. This location is far from Hillbrow, Yeoville and Berea as well as flats in the Central Business District. It is now a long and expensive taxi ride away for the core community the club serves. There is secure parking with a barrier for which a small fee is paid. This is important for Jo'burgers, all of who are familiar with the level of car theft in the city. At night few people stop at traffic lights in town in order to avoid the attention of car jackers. The club is upstairs in a former Casino and can hold around 250 people. *Chez Ntemba's* is the only place in Johannesburg for visiting Congolese musical celebrities to be seen, though they are only seen performing dance steps to new albums. There are now no facilities for live musical performance in the club, in the way there were until 2003. For instance in 2004 J.B. Mpiana and his band were simply advertised on the entrance door, and the news was passed down the grapevine. The clientele is very mixed but South Africans in the club are predominantly women. They fill the dance floor whenever a South African number is played, especially the ones for which the South African version of line dancing works. Women form up into rows and perform synchronised steps up and down the dance floor. When a Congolese number is played the floor is full of Congolese men and South African women, as well as the Africans from the rest of the continent who use the club because they like Congolese music. Kayembe, the owner of the whole

*Chez Ntemba* club chain, discussed the contrast between his experiences of owning clubs in South Africa and other parts of the continent.

*- Normally you see Congolese bands playing in bars around Africa. Why not here?*

**Kayembe** - Before it worked. Now it's difficult - where to house them, to protect them. Here everybody used to play in Hillbrow. In Hillbrow it's very dangerous. Too dangerous. The place is full of bandits. After the music they will attack you, they will beat you. I had a nightclub in Hillbrow. I shut it up. It was no use. I had it seven years. It was always full. Even on a Thursday. Really full. The problem came with the police. They thought they were going to find drugs. They came with ten lorries and started to grab everybody out of the club, with dogs, and took all of us down to the station until 10 in the morning. It's like us here now in the club they stop us all. Right now everybody out and into the police wagons and down to the station. They did that four times. The first time we thought, well they came looking for drugs, they even came into my office with dogs, everywhere. They found nothing but still they took all my customers away and they came back four times. They did that last year. In the months of January, March and of June. When it happened in October I decided we must close. I thought there were people behind it in Hillbrow who wanted to shaft me. Every night at the weekend there were between one and two thousand people



in the club. So there were people who didn't have so many customers in their places and after we closed they were full.

- *There were other clubs though. La Frontiere, La Quirinale ...*

**Kayembe** - There were lots of clubs but they were hassled too much and it's become too dangerous.

- *Was there enough room in that club for musicians?*

**Kayembe** - Yes we played with Marie Paul's Wenge, Extra Musica also played there. I've been here six years with my family, with the children at school. I don't want to do anything that the government might not want me to do. Hillbrow was really good. It's not like Botswana here. In Botswana I have a club that can take 2000 people each night, and there it still works really well. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 24/03/04)

The police and criminals have forced an effective businessman out of the one area where a Congolese club could really work. This is the place that hybridisation might occur between South African and Congolese musicians living in close proximity to each other in a manner reminiscent of Sophiatown. What Kayembe sees is collusion he can't prove between South African club owners and the police in getting his highly successful club closed through continual harassment with the aim of stealing his customers. Kayembe does not feel it is worth challenging this injustice because

being a foreigner with his children at school he feels vulnerable to the attentions of officials.

## **Cape Town. Frankys Story**

Cape Town is a very different city from Johannesburg. There is no inner city area that has seen the kind of transformation experienced in Johannesburg first by Hillbrow and Berea, followed by the Central Business District and Yeoville, from being predominantly white areas to becoming predominantly black areas. There is a far higher concentration of migrants and refugees in Johannesburg. In Cape Town there are some areas that Congolese migrants have favoured, like flats on Long Street in town and Muizenberg along the coast, but there has been no residential concentration of Congolese or other African migrants in what could be called a ghetto. One or two low key clubs struggled along in central Cape Town in 2004. In the *African Junction* a live band was performing called 'The Congolese Band'. With no entrance fee the band were playing for a fee the owner hoped to raise from the extra beer sales the band encouraged. This band was the only Congolese band playing live in Cape Town in 2004. The band played *ndombolo*. There was one significant club with a Congolese hue that managed, against the odds in Cape Town, to establish itself in the 1990s. This was in an area away from the city centre called Sea Point. This is a wealthy, historically Jewish area, by the sea.

The rise and fall of this nightclub, called Frankys is worth telling in detail. It was the first and maybe the last club in the Cape Town area, to which white, black, coloured and migrant all flocked for a brief period in the late 1990s. It was the only place where music which appealed to all these groups was heard on the dance floor and where all these groups felt comfortable in each other's presence. The club appeared

to be bringing the 'New South Africa' into being, actively breaking down the social geography of apartheid without making any claim to be doing so. One particularly keen fan and frequenter of the club in this period was Crystal Ordersen. Crystal grew up in Mitchell's Plain, one of the coloured townships on the Cape flats. With the formal demise of apartheid and Crystal's education driven upward mobility a whole new social world opened up to her and she moved to Johannesburg in 1995 just after the elections to work for the SABC. She moved into Yeoville just as it was starting to go through its transformation and see the arrival of African migrants and had become very trendy.<sup>442</sup> On her return to Cape Town in 1997 her positive experiences of diversity in the inner city of Johannesburg led her and her friends in the direction of the growing migrant population from Africa and to Frankys. She could not believe her luck. This club she found to be similar too but better, at least for her, than the clubs she had left behind in Johannesburg.

**Orderson** – Frankys scene was a kind of immigrant underdog club. Before I saw Sea Point as a shit place - why would you go there? White, Jewish, very chic, rich middle class suburb and suddenly, boom, downtown in Sea Point around the corner from the beach a black club. What's going on? The structure was great. Mirrors, fancy chairs. I'd moved to Yeoville in Johannesburg in 1995 and it was just a mind-blowing experience just after the elections. Clubs, Congolese, party till six in the morning.<sup>443</sup> It so happens that my first trip to Jo'burg and we meet these Congolese guys on

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<sup>442</sup> See Rian Malan's article in the *Fairlady* April 2004 for his observation about returning exiles and how 'almost the entire executive corps of the ANC settled there. Wally Serote, the movement's cultural commissar; Pallo Jordan, its leading intellectual; Geraldine Fraser, Jabu Moloketi, Derek Hanekom, Albie Sachs, Zola Skweyiya, Joe Slovo...'

<sup>443</sup> In 1995 Yeoville was probably the most mixed and trendy place to be in inner city Johannesburg.

the train. We don't know anybody and they become our best friends, they know Yeoville. They were in their 20s and had been there a couple of years. Pretty boys you know. They were from Kinshasa. By 1997 when I moved back to the Cape Frankys was the place. Boom. This is for us. People were turning up in combies of 30 or 40 people especially organised to come from the townships piling out into the club.<sup>444</sup> People hanging out on the street outside the club talking white, black, coloured and immigrants. This had never been seen before in Cape Town in my experience in the Cape Flats. No discrimination on how you look or your hair. Hair is such a big thing here.<sup>445</sup>

*- Tell me about it. Can you tell class from hair?*

**Orderson** - In Cape Town God yes. If you have straight hair, don't have straight hair. Your aunts would make fun of you if your hair was not straight. 'I must marry a man with straight hair because then I wont have to buy lots of straightening stuff' (for the children). Panty hose you can use to plait hair to pick you hair out if it's not straight.

*- To make it straight?*

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<sup>444</sup> Transport is essential to any meeting across the historic divides that separate people spatially. 'Combie' is the name for the small privately owned buses that provide much of the transport in and out of townships.

<sup>445</sup> For an interesting articles on the politics of hair see Erasmus 2000.

**Orderson** - To make it neat. It was all about neatness. So as a child if you were not blessed with straight but have ... *kroes haare*, a very harsh word in Afrikaans. A very ugly word. Coarse. By 10 your Mum starts straightening your hair and it starts falling out. Hectic chemicals. If you don't have straight hair you have such a hard time. Aunts will send you to the hairdresser so your hair is never allowed to develop. So when I got to Johannesburg in 1994 I think 'fuck it just have an afro'. Then working for the SABC I don't fit in. That's why a place like Frankys where for all your life your hair has been an issue and suddenly this place comes along where it's no longer an issue, you don't have to have straight hair, you can do what you want with your hair and you're a gorgeous woman. So you're poor working class and you have to work for white people. So you have to cover your head in the first place. Then you are seen as unattractive. Maybe you came from a rural area and people pay you peanuts and then you come to this place Frankys and you are just...men are coming up to you and vying for your attention, going all dopey over your hair for who you are. They like you. I'm just from Athlone how can they find me attractive? Then when I went to Jo'burg I had that stigma attached to coloured people for voting for the National Party. It's a baggage you carry. Mitchell's Plain voted overwhelmingly National Party and this was the place the United Democratic Front was launched in 1985!

- *So in 1997 when you found these black Africans in Frankys treating you as a fellow African, without that radical South African filter that often goes*

*'those dodgy coloured people' was it a huge relief? Instead it's 'hey, look at her'.*

**Orderson** - Oh yeah. Exactly. It was also a comfortable space for the domestic workers. I started going most weekends, 10 rand and ladies free so it just was the cost of the taxi. Then I got a coloured boyfriend, another professional who had moved out of the township, whose aunt was a bouncer at the club so we got in free with friends. So that was great. It was fascinating. All the other clubs in Cape Town Central were either expensive or whatever. So there's this international convention of journalists in 2000, like it was the UN, with journalists from Uganda, Romania, America and I go 'Right – anybody who wants to come to a club lets go. White people wont take you there, black people wont take you there because it's the other side of town. See the real Cape Town.' I organised all the transport. 20 people and boom. Jolling. Jolling. Strippers for the men. Women free. They have the rumba and the Ugandans are like dancing away. Cape Town can be pretty white, let's face it, so this is black and great. The next minute I see R5 rifles. I'm thinking no. I cover these fucking things as a journalist, these raids. We get the facts from the police. They tell us they are doing a raid. They don't tell you where. You meet them in the Caspers (big armoured vehicles) and you go. Guns and drugs raids. Shebeens. Normally you don't find any guns, maybe a few whatever. They do the whole thing because they need dramatic pictures. I get this rifle in my face. I'm like 'What the fuck?' Am I dreaming? They are not interested. I say there's my Cell phone I need

to make a call. I ring the SABC and say ‘you must send a reporter *now* because I am in this club and I have lots of people with me’. So they say they’ll send someone. The police are like no shit. Men this side. Women this side. I’ve got this mad Romanian woman, white, black women, white men. So the policemen asked the white people ‘What are you doing in this club? You are not supposed to be here’.

- *Describe the police to me.*

**Orderson** - All coloured. Ah coloured male cops.<sup>446</sup> It’s this whole master slave relationship still going on, especially in the police force. I’d been covering the whole gang uprising in the Cape and PAGAD.<sup>447</sup> I’m at this raid in Frankys and guess who’s directing the show. White cops. The very same white cops who directed the investigation on PAGAD. So these coloured cops are being directed by the white Afrikaners. So the Coloureds are saying ‘what are you whites doing here?’

- *Like an apartheid thing? You must be here to buy drugs or something.*

**Orderson** - Exactly. It’s the whole black thing. They search the whites a bit but really they are left alone. So we (non whites) must all march to the

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<sup>446</sup> A disproportionate number of the police are coloured in South Africa, especially in the Cape.

<sup>447</sup> PAGAD People Against Gangsterism and Drugs was a Muslim vigilante movement that started in 1996 in the Cape. There is a substantial literature on the phenomena. See for instance Gottshalk (2005).



toilet. It was so humiliating. They were doing a strip search. Except the white women.

- *What about the white men?*

**Orderson** - They didn't strip-search them either. So the Afro-American journalists get angry and start kicking off shouting at these cops. I'm standing in the toilets thinking 'is this what my country has become?' I'm a law abiding citizen and I'm bringing these people and I get strip searched and these women with their white rubber gloves searching me like lesbians – a aah.

- *Did you write it up?*

**Orderson** - No. I was just so angry. So eventually some of us are left alone when I start saying 'You know what you are doing? I've brought these journalists here'. But what do they do? They take the black people, very dark ones, they take the Malawian guy, the Congolese guy and the Ugandan guy from our group because they don't have their passports. I mean do you go into a club carrying your fucking passport with you? I don't think so.<sup>448</sup> They don't ask the white people for their passports. So they take these guys to the police station. Somebody has made a frantic call to the New York

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<sup>448</sup> Because the risks of getting it stolen are as great as the risk the police will do a raid.

School of Journalists that have organised this course to bring everybody together.

*- It's like welcome to South Africa, a crash course, stripped searched at 2 in the morning.*

**Orderson** - You have to experience some reality. My compatriots from South Africa didn't take it as calmly as I do. They are freaking out. I say at the end of the day we are all adults, this is the reality of what happens to many black South Africans, but especially immigrants. I'm like this happens. I don't apologize. After that I didn't feel like going to the club. After the raid the club just went on that night because they didn't find anything. I interviewed the DJ, Ozzy. I think they were constantly raided. I didn't feel like going back. I was so angry.

*- Has anywhere replaced it?*

**Orderson** - Not really. The DJ's are there but the clubs aren't. Another club opened around the corner from Frankys but it wasn't the same. I'd moved to Sea Point and I would drive past Frankys but I would think I just can't handle that. I was like – no. (Interviewed in Cape Town 26/04/04)

This sad story of the demise of a vibrant nightclub breaking down the barriers of apartheid demonstrates how its legacy still has a grip on South African society that

closes it off from other Africans inside the country in the way that used to happen at the border. Here is the view of one of those other Africans, Ntone Ediabe, on the rise and fall of the club Frankys, the first nightclub for other Africans in Cape Town.

**Ediabe** - When Congolese people get together somewhere as far as they are concerned there is no better music than their music. As far as they are concerned music is Franco, it's Papa Wemba, it's Koffi, it's Wenge. Music doesn't go any further than that. So if they get somewhere they're going to try and start a scene where they can play that music whether in Tokyo or Paris. Of course. That's how Frankys started...

- *Why did it close?*

**Ediabe** - They closed first of all because the rich section of Sea Point began to feel like Hillbrow had arrived. I mean most of the drug trade goes on in white clubs...It was a just a very bothersome kind of presence. It was very visible. Frankys on a Friday night. Jesus man, it was so full. So you had more and more police raids, so obviously foreigners stop going who don't want to end up on their way out of the country and locals who don't want to have to go through that kind of experience. That's how Frankys faded up, very slowly, it was very vicious. (Interviewed in Cape Town 28/06/02)

Finally a Brazzavilleois DJ who worked in the club but is not longer able to make a living playing Congolese music recounted his memories.

**Ozzy** - There was a Congolese community that was well established in Sea Point that went back to the early 1990s. They approached the Frankys owner and said we can fill this place for you but the music has to change... They found me and asked me to DJ in October 1996. Franky was a cool guy. White German second generation born in Zim. He didn't care as long as there was money coming in. He had nothing against Congolese people. We slipped in about 10 to 20% *kwaito*. Rn'B was the music that crossed over and got everybody on the dance floor including the Congolese. So Congolese was around 20 to 30%. It was well balanced. To begin with it was fairly South African but very mixed black and white. SABC wanted to do a documentary about the club because it was the only club that had black and white people, coloured, foreigners everybody with no incidents. Peacefully mingling together. People were coming from all over. It could take 600.

The townships didn't have any proper clubs so everybody started coming to Frankys from the townships. We started having this problem that people coming for Hip Hop weren't too happy to listen to this other stuff. That's the coloured crowd. The township crowd want more *kwaito* and the immigrant crowd liked the Congolese but they enjoy the other music. We'd get these coloured guys coming up saying you play too much foreign music and Congolese started coming up saying you play too much American music and a township guys would say you don't play enough *kwaito*. We had a

conflict developing. Then in 1999 a club called 169 opened in Cape Town playing Hip Hop and Rn'B only and we lost half our crowd. That's mainly coloured and white. Then a local *kwaito* club opened in Kijima and we lost a lot of the township audience. New Year 2000 we were empty.

Everywhere else was full. I kept that mix trying to attract people but it didn't work...The place was raided in 2000 and 2001. I was there. They stripped searched everybody. They didn't find anything major, less than they would find in white clubs.

- *Crystal felt it was raided because of foreigners being there.*

**Ozzy** - Yeah that's true. They don't target the white rave clubs. The locals were starting to complain. I remember in 1999 after the first raid a lot of people didn't come back. That was another reason for the decline.

- *What was the behaviour of the police like on that first raid?*

**Ozzy** - First of all it wasn't the normal police it was Special Forces. It was really heavy. I was hit with a gun. I mean damn. Everybody on floor. Men separated from women. Locals from foreigners. Papers papers. You don't have papers off to the police station...So many people were taken to the station and most of them didn't come back. 6 months later there was a second raid and that just made things worse...In Frankys it was really evenly mixed - 25% black foreigners, just a few Nigerians and more Congolese,

Zambians, East Africans and then 25% each of black, coloured and white.

The thing about this was that Congolese music wasn't the only music there so anybody going to Frankys had to make a concession to go there. When it closed I started playing around town. In 2002 Snap opened up a different section to play Congolese music.

- *So maybe that's the way to do it to have sections.*

**Ozzy** - Yes but the problem was that the guys would come but the ladies didn't. The men would go off to the Rn'B or House or *kwaito* sections looking for women. So the Congolese section would be empty. So the owner closed that down. (Interviewed in Cape Town 29/04/04)

This interview with Ozzy brings together the various threads of the problem for Congolese music compared to elsewhere on the continent. As a DJ he is very aware of how the social divisions come out musically. The pressure of these divisions eventually led to the creation of separate clubs for the black township *kwaito* audience and white and coloured Rn'B audience that took away some of their customers. Whether this would have been enough to see the closure of the club without the threat posed to the audience of police raids is impossible to tell. The combination was more than enough though and stopped Ozzy finding out if a permanent mixed audience could be built up. The perception of Nigerians and Moroccans moving in to trade drugs did not help with the local population. The

imagined association of Nigerians with drugs and prostitution is widespread whatever the reality.



Congolese Musica gathers in Sea Point to be interviewed.

Another DJ who wished to start a small club aimed at the Congolese in Muizenberg was closed down before he even performed one night. As one of the only areas around the Cape where the Congolese have settled in any numbers this was potentially a good area for the venture.

**Mthembu-Salter** - I identified Muizenberg because that's somewhere where the Congolese are, where they live. Muizenberg is quite inner city it's got that vibe when you go around the back streets. This was 1996. So I thought right put the club there and then people will turn up because they are close by. So I found a place owned by two white guys where the Congolese were already hanging out on Church St. I thought brilliant I've fallen on my feet. The manager was a white guy from Durban. He didn't know the first thing

about the Congolese – he called them Congolans, I remember that. He thought you know Angolans so Congolans. He preferred them to coloureds. In his view they drank less. He also had a bit of a thing that as a white Durbanite he was cooler about these things than the average white Cape Tonian. I told him, ‘Look I’ll be able to ram this place every week. Just have to advertise it’. He said fine. I was all set to do it on the Friday. The owner rang on the Thursday to say there’d been an incident the night before. The place had a hard core of coloured drinkers who’d be in there by 10 in the morning. An argument had developed. The Congolese regarded these guys as tramps. A verbal slanging match had kicked off over who was sitting in whose seat and it spilled into the street. The boss tried to cool it out but the police turned up and started beating up the Congolese guys. The manager said they just weighed in as if they were quite up for the opportunity like they had a hiding coming and here it was. The police were making this public. So I thought never mind, fights happen. Sort it out. The next thing he tells me is that there’s been an urgent application to the magistrate for not only his license but also the license of the establishment to operate at all to be taken away. There was just one guy across the street who had made a complaint. It seemed like an unholy alliance. Muslim landlord, Afrikaner landlord, coloured cops, white resident they all combined to say – ‘We don’t want you’. The thought of a black club in Muizenberg – no no. So the bar owner gave in and said it couldn’t work. After that I went to Pharaohs and to Birdwatchers, also in Muizenberg. Initially they were into it. When I told them it was Congolese people who’d be coming they said no,



we don't allow black people in these clubs, this is Birdwatchers. I then reported Birdwatchers to the human rights commission and I've heard dickie bird since. They carry on having all white gothic events. There's a whole chunk of white Muizenberg that's just fucking racist. It was just 'I don't let blacks in my club'. Interviewed in Cape Town 01/05/05

### **9:15 South Africa: Conclusion**

There is no moral or musical imperative why Congolese music in particular should take hold in South Africa in the way it has north of the border. The strength of South African musical culture is no bad thing even if its fragmentation still bears testimony to the negative legacy of apartheid. The complexity of the three dimensions to Congolese consciousness is further compounded by the experience of a violent xenophobia amongst fellow Africans in South Africa, especially when that xenophobia is racialised. For black South Africans there appears to be more of a two-sided cultural dialogue with black America. What is also clear is that xenophobia in South Africa plays a significant role in creating a barrier between South Africans and other Africans, along with their musical culture. This barrier prevents the evolution of the hybrid forms that could come into being were the Congolese not to be excluded from South African society. As this study highlights, the mixing that developed for a brief period in the early 1990s in Hillbrow, was prevented from producing some new musical and social synthesis, by the use of police tactics reminiscent of the apartheid era, to close down clubs where Congolese music could be heard and where a hugely influential South African like Brenda Fassie could and did mix with Congolese musicians and their community. The fragmentation of the South African music scene along race and class lines compounded the problem of police raids for the one club in Cape Town that broke the mould of segregated audiences. A determined white immigrant journalist like Mthembu-Salter, married to a South African, could not even get past first base in his attempt to set up a mixed nightclub.

The well-grounded reluctance to challenge xenophobic attitudes and behaviour amongst migrants may not hold for their children. The second generation, born with South African citizenship, may yet come to be accepted as part of South African society. For those children of the Congolese that have South African citizenship but continue to be discriminated against because of their looks and parentage the experience from Britain at least indicates that they are likely to be more pro-active in resisting and challenging such discrimination being more secure in their citizenship status, sense of entitlement, command of the language and general knowledge of the country. In the South African context, where the Congolese experience the kind of social exclusion that is so familiar for Africans in Europe, the effects of that exclusion do not seem to be forcing the first generation into a self-reflective concern with authenticity or identity though. Survival by whatever means remains the central focus of concern in a manner that has been learnt in the harsh economic circumstances that they have left behind. The three dimensions to Congolese national consciousness, indigenous, Diasporic and European, make them highly adaptable to the survival demands of the varied societies in which they find themselves. That said the expression of anger amongst Congolese migrants in South Africa about their treatment is increasingly common. A child growing up in Cape Town with a Congolese parent will take a different path to national consciousness from a child in Kinshasa or Brazzaville. Though this self-reflective concern with identity maybe a burden forced on those who find themselves excluded it maybe part of the basis for the formation of a community capable of resisting xenophobic attacks and defending

a cultural and physical space. This could yet be a space in which Congolese music can be heard and with which some South Africans come to connect.

There are stronger musical connections between Congolese and South African musical traditions than between say Belgium or French ones at the fundamental level, demonstrated by the speed with which black South African women pick up Congolese the dances. This was evident in the rehearsals for the show put on by Malcot Lowiso's band for Ezodumo at which the young black South African women dancers learnt the moves from the young Congolese men. The Congolese will also find allies in such a process in the political tradition of struggle for human rights in South Africa. There is already a strong movement in South Africa to challenge xenophobia. The National Consortium on Refugee Affairs initiated the 'Roll Back Xenophobia Campaign' in 1999 supported by the South African Human Rights Commission. There is strong academic research for use in that struggle produced by the South African Migration Project. As the end of Thabo Mbeki's period in office draws to an end the focus of attention is on who will follow him. This will no doubt have a significant impact on how the South African national project continues to be framed. Whether the rest of Africa continues to play the role of a threatening and undifferentiated malevolent force attempting to invade the beautiful rainbow nation or the continent of which South Africa is an integral part has yet to be seen.

## Conclusion.

### Moments of Freedom

‘Folk music remains my main source of inspiration. I immerse myself in it whenever

I want to create something’. Jean Serge Essous 1970.<sup>449</sup>



Interviewing Max Massengo, Jean Serge Essous and Francis Bitshoumanou in Brazzaville  
2005.

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<sup>449</sup> Quoted in Gondola (1997: 69) Jean Serge Essous is one of the oldest surviving members of the original OK Jazz band, now resident in Brazzaville, his hometown. He played sax and clarinet with Negro Jazz in Brazzaville, before moving to Leopoldville in 1956 to work for the Loningisa label. He joined OK Jazz during its first formation before moving with Bowane to the newly formed Essengo studio in 1957 and the band Rock-a-mambo. Essous returned to Brazzaville in 1959 to form the seminal band that became Les Bantous de la Capitale. He stayed until 1964 when state demands prevented the band taking up an engagement in Abidjan for a year. He left the band and moved to Paris and joined Ry-Co Jazz, travelling with the band to Martinique and the French Antilles in 1967. He returned to Brazzaville and Les Bantous in 1971 (Stewart 2000 and interviewed in Brazzaville 21/09/05). Max Massengo sang in one of the early bands of the mid 1950s, Negro Succes and ‘Bitchou’ was the bassist in Les Bantous 1962-1964 and OK Jazz from 1965-1972.

The four paradoxes with which I introduced this thesis have now been substantially addressed. The first of these was how the development of a cohesive Congolese national urban dance music continued after independence in an era of secessionist civil war between central government and Katanga, and how success across Africa continued in the late 1970s and 1980s when Zaire saw the gradual hollowing out of the state and the implosion of its economy. In understanding this paradox we have looked, first, at how, after World War II, Congolese musicians created a powerful and cohesive urban musical form in Brazzaville and Leopoldville well before the tumultuous events of independence. This form transcended the sum of the hybrid African, European and Latin American parts that inspired its creation.<sup>450</sup> Second we have looked at how the record industry developed by Greek and Jewish entrepreneurs to sell this music before independence occurred specifically in one place – the capital of the Belgian Congo, Leopoldville, and how this led to the subsequent domination of continental popularity by bands from Leopoldville/Kinshasa rather than Brazzaville. These entrepreneurs also funded the national and international touring in Africa of their young stars, musicians like Wendo Kolosoy, and established distribution for their records all over the continent through subsidiaries. Third we have looked at how the development of substantial radio broadcasting capacity by the Belgian and French colonial authorities in Leopoldville and Brazzaville, as part of the war effort after the German invasion, meant those new recordings of Congolese rumba could be heard by the Congolese as the voice of their nation even under colonial rule. After independence the radio in

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<sup>450</sup> See Bender (2004: 103) for his opinion concerning the negative implications for the creative status accorded African urban music of the ubiquitous academic use of the word ‘ingredients’ in describing this kind of mixture. He sees its use as implying ‘that there can hardly be an original contribution by the artists themselves...(that) they only take in influences’. I disagree, seeing the use of influences as common to all creativity, musical or otherwise.

Leopoldville began broadcasting far later into the night than radio from Brazzaville, when atmospheric conditions for reception are better and people want music, and this also contributed to the success of music from South of the river. Fourth, this national voice came into being during the era when resistance to colonial rule provided a force for national unity in both Congo's, as in many other parts of Africa ( Wheeler 2005). Fifth when this unifying force disappeared after independence and the centrifugal forces of language, region and divided political parties vying for the fruits of independence started to pull in the opposite direction, this national voice was not weakened by those centrifugal forces. In fact quite the opposite occurred. Musicians in the regions were drawn like moths to the light of the cultural and entrepreneurial creativity that continued in the capital and fled the darkness of conflict in the regions. They went to join those musicians they identified with national independence they had heard on the radio. These were musicians from all over the country, united in one musical genre - rumba. They were also united for the most part by the use of a single national African language when it came to music and song – Lingala – even when they came from Swahili or Tshiluba speaking areas of the country. Now these musicians also found themselves with new and substantial support from Congolese politicians with a lot of money. But these were politicians also with a desire to be identified with what this new music and its musicians stood for – a creative African modernity with a national Congolese voice. So began a long era of social and economic proximity between musicians and politicians. This was an era when the willing desire to compose songs of national unity amongst Congolese musicians turned into the experience of having lyrical expression policed by the state for signs of disloyalty. In Zaire this was loyalty to President Mobutu and

the MPR. Conversely rich rewards were offered for the glorification of the President and his party. The regions, even in mineral rich Katatanga, remained without distinct urban dance music or a recording industry that could compete with the now established musical genre recorded and broadcast in the capital. This was a genre that continued to reflect the diversity of Congolese society but through one predominant language. Lingala was a language made national by the Belgian colonists through its use in the *Force Publique* and by Mobutu in the civil service and army. This unifying national language was consolidated after independence and freed of this single association with abusive power by its use in song by musicians in a way that none of the other languages made national (French, Tshiluba, Kikongo and Swahili) could compete. The violent struggle for power after independence in the early 1960s also drove Congolese musicians in eastern and southern Congo, where the worst conflict was to be centred in Katanga, into neighbouring countries, especially Zambia and Kenya where recording industries existed. So began the exodus of Congolese musicians all over Africa. They have provided the essential live versions of the music Africans with access to radios had already heard. The civil war that has endured since 1997 in eastern Congo continues drive musicians looking for a more peaceful life into neighbouring countries and west to Kinshasa.

The second paradox we have considered has been how more populous African countries like Nigeria and South Africa, with bigger economies, older record industries and older hybrid urban dance music, have not achieved the continental success of the Congolese, especially given Congolese state implosion and a plundered economy. Both Nigeria and South Africa are countries with large internal



markets for their record industries that provided far greater opportunities for profit than export to their immediate neighbours during the vinyl era. More important than this though has been the lack of the cohesive and enduring national musical voice by which they could be identified, especially in the era of independence in the 1960s. This is obviously compounded in the case of South Africa by its status as a pariah in Africa after independence because of apartheid and the effect of apartheid in suppressing the development of a unified national South African musical voice. It is interesting that before Congolese independence in the 1950s South African music did have something approaching a national voice, especially in the form of the Manhattan Brothers when Miriam Makeba sang with them. In the 1950s this music had a bigger influence on local bands in Katanga and Southern Africa generally than Cuban music, through radio, records and live gigs, especially gigs by the Manhattan Brothers. Congolese musicians in Lubumbashi adopted their dress codes as well as their rhythms and melodies for songs composed in Swahili. Ghana could be said to have possessed a national urban musical voice in the late 1950s and 1960s with Highlife, but they lacked a national radio broadcasting capacity turned towards Africa. This was a capacity that existed in Congo/Zaire and was one into which President Mobutu poured resources during the years of high state revenues from copper in the early 1970s. Ghana also lacked entrepreneurs like the Greeks in Leopoldville distributing continent wide before independence. More important than this Highlife failed to go through the continual process of self re-invention and change that the Congolese achieved, change that reflected changing times in Africa and the black Atlantic. This was what meant Congolese musicians managed to

sustain their popularity long after the boost that came at the time of independence to the popularity already achieved on radio and record in the 1950s.

The third paradox we have considered is the how the spread of Congolese music to the rest of Africa continued in face of the cultural nationalism that followed independence in countries like Zambia, Tanzania, Guinea and Mali. Many of the leaders of the independence movements invited Congolese musicians to perform at their independence day celebrations and for many years after. They also invited popular bands like African Jazz, OK Jazz and the Brazzaville band Les Bantous de la Capitale, for long stays in their countries at the expense of the state to perform for their citizens in stadiums and halls. The same associations of Congolese music with an African modernity that attracted Mobutu to identifying himself with them attracted these politicians to do likewise. Added to this African politicians, like Mobutu, expected the Congolese musicians they invited to praise them and their parties in song. For the leaders of the independence movements the threat of domination of the local urban dance scene in their countries by the Congolese was balanced by desire that their own countries should build a national musical voice comparable to that of the Congolese. Who better to learn how to do this from than the Congolese musicians who had excelled at it? This was the era of Pan-Africanism, an era when the Congolese national musical expression could be drawn into the nationalist project of leaders like Sekou Touré, Modibo Keita and Kenneth Kaunda, as an example of what they expected and in the case of Touré and Keita, funded their own musicians to embark on creating – a national urban dance music. The fact that in the process of providing their musicians with a model, in the Congolese, of how to

create a new national urban musical form and the skills and stage craft to perform it, they simultaneously furthered the spread and popularity of Congolese music was not a problem for them. Just how the national urban music evolved in each country varies widely. It did not take long in Guinea or Mali for local musicians, funded by the state, to produce the national musical forms Touré and Keita wanted to see. These forms came to dominate their national markets without preventing the continued attraction of Congolese music or prevent visiting Congolese stars from attracting huge crowds – something Werrason, J.B.Mpiana and Koffi Olomide have all done in the new millenium in Guinea and Mali. In Zambia local urban dance music struggled to compete with the Congolese musical behemoth sitting on their border and this despite Kaunda's attempts, through national radio quotas in the 1970s, to foster a Zambian national form.

The fourth paradox which we have addressed is how Congolese migrants, and those in exile, even when despairing at the state of their country, retain a sense of positive loyalty to the country in which they have had such bitter experiences in the recent past. This is true of Congolese musicians in Tanzania and Kenya, that were interviewed for this study, that have been welcomed and included in the national music scene, just as it is by those who find themselves marginalised and excluded in South Africa. The foregoing discussion of how the Congolese have created and sustained a national musical form that has spread through much of the African continent to an extent that no other can match is part of the explanation. Congolese rumba has not only provided a positive and living focus of Congolese identity but also a vehicle through which migrants and exiles can inhabit a cultural space that is

made Congolese by the sound of their music, at home, on the radio, in buses and in bars, nightclubs and churches.<sup>451</sup> For a musician like Remmy Ongala, his engagement with and immersion, and inclusion in Tanzanian society and the music scene in Dar es Salaam, do not stop him celebrating and recognising his Congolese musical heritage. This is a powerful heritage that has provided him with the resources to inter-act creatively with his Tanzanian colleagues. It also shows how in the absence of xenophobic social exclusion this national identity and heritage is not a source of anxious self validation or fraught authentication. By contrast, for a musician like Malcot Lowiso, struggling to find a social and economic space for Congolese music in South Africa, his national music nonetheless provides a powerful source of self worth in the face of prejudice. It also provides an invigorating but comfortable acoustic space in the Congolese bars of Yeovil and those ghetto like places in Johannesburg and Cape Town that come into being when groups are marginalised. The experience of inclusion or prejudice and exclusion of migrants and those in diaspora clearly shapes the extent to which the issue of national identity and 'race' become central personal and collective concerns. The experience of Diaspora and migration are not confined to, but still tend to be defined purely by, those in societies from which they find themselves excluded, because of this.

Understanding these paradoxes has helped in addressing the major concern of this study – tracing and explaining the spread of Congolese music in Africa and looking at the reasons behind South Africa's resistance to the lure of the rumba and marginalisation of Congolese migrants. Having done that we can now use this

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<sup>451</sup> The continent wide growth of independent churches and the migration of secular musicians and their music into these spaces is worthy of a full length study in itself.

conclusion to address a theoretically weighty and fraught issue in understanding the appeal of Congolese music – its perceived modernity. The story behind the spread of Congolese popular music in Africa in the twentieth century began with the craze for Latin American music in Leopoldville and Brazzaville in the 1940s. The Atlantic circle of cultural influence back and forth between the Americas and Africa has been the subject of academic interest for some time (Gilroy 1993). The emphasis in the case of Cuban son and rumba has been on their African roots, and their return to Africa in these mutated forms (Kubik 1999: 96-104, Roberts 1979 and Moore 1997). Congolese popular music has continued integrating new instrumentation and new influences without a break in a core lineage since the 1950s when this Latin influence was first domesticated. This has made for an immediately identifiable sound in the travels of Congolese music around Africa. This close association with Latin music lends itself to an understanding of Congolese music as being cosmopolitan. In this conclusion I want to challenge the idea that the cosmopolitan sits outside rather than within the idea of being modern, at least in the view of Congolese musicians. In my view one of the factors that has been critical to the continental spread of the music has been its perceived modernity. This is a modernity in which the cosmopolitanism of the Black Atlantic inscribed in the African domestication of Latin music is not antithetical to the specificities of the national and the indigenous. It is the national and indigenous that provides the concrete vehicle and creative resources for synthesis with the cosmopolitan. The perceived Congolese-ness of the music has been as important to its success as the modernity implied by its cosmopolitan re-appropriations. The appeal of what has been perceived to be modern in Africa has long been recognised, with the modern

frequently a mask for the Western (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993; Deutsch, Probst and Schmidt 2002). So the appeal of a specifically Congolese African modernity outside its land of origin is particularly interesting. The interplay of the national and the cosmopolitan in the constitution of that perceived modernity have combined with the more obvious influence of the travels of the musicians, the commercial force of record companies and the technological development of radio since independence to mean that it has been the Congolese version of musical modernity rather than that of any other African country that triumphed across the continent. Having already dealt with these forces of diffusion it is important now to engage with the way the force of the idea of the modern has also contributed to that diffusion.

Cosmopolitanism is a word that has assumed increasing significance in the academy in discussions concerning diasporic identities like that of the Congolese and is a subject that deserves a more extended discussion here in relation to any conception of the modern. Gilroy has been influential in placing cosmopolitanism at the heart of his utopian anti-racist political project, alongside the heterocultural and the postanthropological (Gilroy 2000: 334).<sup>452</sup> But it is also a word that has made its way into some of the best writing on African popular music. Both White (2002), writing about Congolese rumba, and Turino (2000), writing about Zimbabwean pop develop the idea of cosmopolitanism in some ways as an alternative to the word

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<sup>452</sup> The collection of work in Vertovec and Cohen *et al.* (2002) provides a consistently positive affirmation of the potential of the idea; see Kaldor (2002: 276) for an example. The authors are careful to qualify the word and bemoan the lack of a well articulated cosmopolitan political project (p.21). Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk (2005) tread in this territory but use 'diaspora' and 'hybridity' as offering a similarly liberating potential from 'supremacist capitalist patriarchy' and chauvinist nationalism but declare themselves disappointed (20005:1) about the unfulfilled potential of these ideas in the face of the 'War on Terror'.

preferred by Congolese musicians to describe their music – modern.<sup>453</sup> Following from this perception of the music as modern, and despite the importance of cosmopolitanism, I will make the case in this conclusion for a conception of modernist dispositions<sup>454</sup> as the embracing framework for an understanding of the attraction of signs of cosmopolitanism that can be read in the music, dance and fashion of Congolese musicians. White keeps the word modern in inverted commas, even though he is well aware that being ‘modern’ is more central to Congolese perceptions of their music than being cosmopolitan (or should I say ‘cosmopolitan’). He argues that it is cosmopolitanism that was, and still is, central to the attraction of the Latin influence in Africa, even though the Congolese may not describe its attraction in this way, preferring to see its Congolese appropriation as the return of their own music taken to Latin America by African slaves.

I was immediately struck by local ways of speaking about popular music, which was known in Kinshasa as “*la musique zaïroise moderne*”...The “modernity” of Congolese popular music was marked not only by its accoutrements (electric guitars, expensive European cars, cellular phones and international high fashion) but also by the degree of its

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<sup>453</sup> This focus on the meaning and significance of modernity and cosmopolitanism is a metropolitan academic pre-occupation that I brought to my questioning. That said when asking the open ended question ‘why do you think Congolese music has been so popular in Africa?’ its perceived modernity and early modernisation were the response I was given to explain its attraction most often by Congolese musicians and musical entrepreneurs alongside the forces of diffusion on radio and record. Further exploration of the meaning of the modern was not volunteered without questioning.

<sup>454</sup> I have used the idea of a ‘modernist disposition’ as a way of referring to a positive disposition towards change, and of a validation of such change through the idea of ‘the modern’. It has nothing to do with the twentieth century European ‘modernist’ art movement. ‘The modern’ is used here to refer to change that is perceived as ameliorative, whether that be technological, social or economic, and not *per se* by industrialisation, bureaucratisation or democratisation on a Euro-American model.

commercialization and by the way it represents...Congolesse national identity.

(White 2002: 664)

While I do believe markers of being “modern” are important to people in Kinshasa ... it is important to distinguish between debates that are “about” modernity and debates that take place “within” modernity... I am no longer convinced that people in Kinshasa are using music to make claims about being “modern”...They have always been modern and the way they talk about Afro-Cuban music clearly reflects this knowledge. (White 2002: 664)

White goes on to claim that modernity is something that happens to people while cosmopolitanism is something people do. This distinction, along with the distinction between debates ‘about’ and ‘within’ modernity, appears to me to miss the basic point the Congolesse are making in calling their music modern rather than cosmopolitan. Modern is a bigger word that can contain the cosmopolitan. White observes that it is the local word of choice to define their music when put together with the nation, Zaire, and often the genre rumba. By this association it is the foreignness of modernity that is domesticated, that is the Western version of modernity that in many of its economic and military manifestations does happen to people.<sup>455</sup> That the Congolesse musicians making popular music ‘have always been

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<sup>455</sup> The literature on modernity, modernities and modernization theory is vast. See Giddens (1985, 1991 and 1994) for a general theorist with a long record on the subject and an unfashionable resistance to post-modernism. Giddens focuses on the emergence of capitalism, the nation-state and institutionalized science and the diverse response of societies to their emergence, as central to the definition of modernity rather than defining it with dates or an ethic like individualism, or rationalization. In Giddens (1991) an understanding of late modernity is provided characterised by heightened reflexivity in the project of personal identity disembedded from time and space and a double hermeneutic in which the representations of social science is problematised by the agency of its social object in using those representations in fashioning themselves. Gilroy (1994 and 2000)



modern' does not mean they have not had to put in the work that makes it possible to define the Congolese as modern. In this sense being modern is something people have to do as well as something that happens to them. In the process they can conduct a practical debate 'about' what modernity is as well as debating 'within' the modernity so defined. The main point is that it is with the idea of the modern that the cosmopolitan in Latin music is thought and validated in Congolese music, an observation White at another point is happy to celebrate seeing its appropriation as an example of the Congolese *passion moderniste* (White 2002: 681). However White goes on to draw the conclusion that it was the non-European cosmopolitanism of Latin music that was central to its attraction for the Congolese after their experience of a particularly harsh European colonialism. The fact that the Congolese do not generally express such a view does not necessarily invalidate White's claim but in the absence of a basis for falsification for such claims it remains a contentious one. For Congolese musicians the view they generally express is that this attraction remains as part of a bigger attraction to and engagement with defining the modern. It appears that the way its definition is developing amongst the Congolese presents a challenge to those academics wishing to dismiss the analytic utility of 'modernity' or rather for my purposes, modernist dispositions.

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provides a very different starting point, reading modernity and the Enlightenment project through the lense of the slave trade and colonialism and Black Atlantic counter modernities. *African Modernities* (2002) edited by Deutsch, Probst and Heike provides a good bibliography with an African focus on the subject and includes a discussion of the post-modernist challenge to modernism. See Young (2001) for an historical discussion of the close relationship between post-modernism's and postcolonialism's challenge to modernism in its monolithic Euro-centric varieties. Loomba (1998) makes the case specifically for postcolonialism. See Geschiere and Rowlands (1996) for limited discussion of the 'domestication of modernity'. See Coplan (2002); Kofi (2003) and Waterman (1990) for more on this debate as it relates to popular music in Africa.

Turino makes a more developed case for the move away from the use of the concept modernity as well as going on to make a critique of musical cosmopolitans in Zimbabwe and thereby of the academic celebration of cosmopolitanism *per se*. This brief diversion into Zimbabwean pop is useful because Turino makes a strong case for new analytic terminology. Turino, writing about urban popular music in Zimbabwe, and self avowedly following in the theoretical footsteps of the Comaroffs, perceives modernity to be an ideologically loaded concept rather than an analytical category, and so eschews it in favour of the category ‘cosmopolitan’ (Turino 2000: 6).<sup>456</sup> He sees the concept of ‘modernity’, when deriving its meaning from its counterpart ‘tradition’, as being weighed down with evolutionist notions of human development in which European and post-Enlightenment ethics and economics are seen as ‘...the apex of universal development through rhetorical hijacking of contemporary time: it is an “ideology-in-the-making”’. (Turino 2000: 6)

This is now familiar territory for anthropologists.<sup>457</sup> Turino goes beyond this and attempts a similar critique of the growing use of the idea of ‘globalization’ as an analytical category. He sees the notion of globalization as a category that masks the same ideological foundations that are evident in the use of traditional and modern as analytic categories. In both frameworks modernist capitalism is our common evolutionary destination. Globalization merely moves us from the privileging of time to privileging space as the context for the same evolutionary teleology.

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<sup>456</sup> See John Comaroff’s (2002:107-135) contribution to *African Modernities* for an update of the position stated with Jean Comaroff in 1993.

<sup>457</sup> The Comaroff’s have consistently written in this vein since. See Jean Comaroff (1985).

I believe that this spatially based discourse may well operate in a parallel manner to, and may ultimately have similar effects to, the totalizing, temporally based discourse of modernity with its concomitant “traditional/modern” dichotomy and central ideas of progress, rationalism and objectification. (Turino 2006: 6)

It is worth pursuing Turino’s attempt to replace the notions of modernity and globalization with cosmopolitanism into his analysis of post-independence Zimbabwean pop to assess the extent of the utility of the concept in understanding this aspect of the impact and appeal of Congolese rumba in Africa.

Turino discerns cosmopolitan dispositions in the trajectory of the leading light of Zimbabwean popular music, Thomas Mapfumo. On the face of it Mapfumo’s post-independence development of an ‘authentically’ Zimbabwean fusion of rural acoustic *mbira* music with urban electric dance band music might seem an unlikely candidate for being seen as a music driven by cosmopolitan dispositions. For Turino those dispositions are formed by the two forces he identifies as central to present day cosmopolitans – capitalism and state driven nationalism – forces that are used incidentally in an institutional definition of modernity (Giddens 1985, 1990). Turino perceives the centrality of the *mbira* sound to Mapfumo’s music as the ironic outcome of precisely those cosmopolitan dispositions - first in the period of nationalist struggle and immediately after independence in the early 1980s as a reflection of the ‘cultural nation building’ upon which ZANU embarked. Second, when the popularity of this music began to decline in the mid 1980s, as urban

disillusion with ZANU began to set in, Mapfumo remained committed to it out of a canny recognition of its potential on the international market. Mapfumo, Turino says, was in search not so much of his roots in developing the *mbira* sound as of the rich Euro-American audience for whom ‘authenticity’, in the form of identifiably distinctive Southern hemisphere national and ethnic roots, were a major selling point. Mapfumo’s music had both. Mapfumo made the associations explicit. He dressed in army fatigues on stage in Europe to make clear the association between the Zimbabwean liberation struggle and his music and by the end of the 1980s included not only the sound of *mbira* on guitar but also the instrument itself in his stage line-up. After he achieved financial success in Europe and America in the mid 1980s the style of music he played again became popular back in Harare in the late 1980s (Turino 2000: 336-354).

Turino’s use of the concept cosmopolitan appears to pull all musicians who sell their work into its nexus, as commoditization is one of the two processes he identifies as central to the disposition of cosmopolitans. This starting point has its analytical attractions because it does away with some of the problems of the traditional/modern dichotomy, especially when a Eurocentric teleology provides the definition of modernity. It also allows for a better analytical vantage point from which to consider the effects of the local historical dynamics and specificities of cosmopolitan dispositions that have been internalised, especially by the nationalist elites that led the liberation struggles, and how in the process the expression of those dispositions begins to take on a specific and especially national character. Indeed one of the demands of a cultural nationalist project is that they should do so.

Turino considers there is too much celebrating of all the new syncretic post-independence urban music in Africa by ethnomusicologists without recognising how this urban music springs from and reproduces what is a politically suspect capitalist and nationalist habitus characteristic of those with cosmopolitan dispositions.<sup>458</sup>

What is not clear, when Turino makes this point, is what possible institutional and economic basis, other than the state or market, there could be for creating cities, for framing dispositions and creating the habitus of urban life. Turino goes some way to positing the possibility of specifically African ‘cosmopolitans’ as a challenge to the teleology of a homogenising modernist capitalism, but that specificity is only partial and therefore compromised. The cosmopolitan dispositions are compromised in effect by their very modernity, a modernity that implies capitalism and state power. Turino reserves the mantle of true or deep alternatives to the globalizing tendencies of the capitalist and nationalist elements in the dispositions of cosmopolitans like Mapfumo for

...those people in Zimbabwe, especially among the African peasantry and lower working classes, who remain culturally distinct from modernist cosmopolitanism. For lack of a better term I will use the word *indigenous* to refer to people and lifeways that are part of cultural trajectories with roots predating the colonial period or that, in terms of ethos and practice, provide local alternatives to cosmopolitanism. (People who)... continue to operate from premises fundamentally distinct to the various brands of contemporary

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<sup>458</sup> See Bourdieu's (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice* for the intended use of the notion *habitus*.

cosmopolitanism, and that these alternative lifeways should not be written off as imaginary. (Turino 2000:19)

Turino is one of the few authors who really make a good go of defining a usable analytical category as an alternative to 'modernity'. However, whatever the merits of Turino's analysis of Zimbabwean music history, cosmopolitanism remains a concept that neither Congolese musicians nor fans use about themselves or their music. The Kinois in particular have experienced the deep corruption as well as disintegration of both the concrete manifestations of 'modernist cosmopolitanism' Turino specifies, namely the Congolese state and formal Congolese capitalism, to the point where money itself no longer 'worked' in the 1990s. Having experienced this disintegration they are not mystified about the desirability or the undesirability of a functioning state or market, hegemonic or otherwise. Despite those desperate experiences of the perversion of the institutions with which modernity is usually identified, for Congolese musicians, it is still the modernisation of Congolese music that occurred in the 1950s and 1960s that they see as central to its appeal both to them and their audience.

The modern is a concept that escapes a straightforward definitional capture. Its value can mutate as it moves from being associated with the gross violence and corrupt excesses of Mobutu's nonetheless 'modern', as in contemporary, administration to the modernity of the music made under that administration. What the modernisation of Congolese music meant was not first related to its commoditisation, though this played a part. Nor was it only about nationalism, though this also played a part. It

was more often about a distinctly African and Congolese modernity and this meant looking to the African Diaspora as much as to the homeland for inspiration. In this sense the cosmopolitan influence of Latin music is incorporated as part of what made the music modern. The second ingredient perceived by musicians to have distinguished what was seen as 'modern' in urban Congolese music after 1950 is not classifiable as peculiarly 'capitalist' or 'statist'. That ingredient is the use of what is seen as modern technology, especially electric guitars, but all the other forms of modern technology - long distance travel by 'modern' transport to perform, the use of recording studios, the pressing of records, radio broadcasting of the music and so on. These forms of technology may in fact be enmeshed in the power relations of state and capital but their use is not defined by either per se. These are not just the 'accoutrements', as White puts it, of modernity but central to how it is defined and understood. There are participatory and communitarian means of producing, maintaining and distributing them even if this remains a rare phenomenon. The existence and use of new technology should not be understood as *inherently* tied only to capitalist or statist economic systems - however much their production and distribution is in practice fostered by those forces and new technologies have played a role in the expansion of capitalism and the nation state. Their use, because *new* and involving rapid change, I would suggest, is experienced and perceived as modern whether their production and distribution is by any mix of the three economic systems, communitarian, state or market. It is this newness, and the celebration of this newness, that is as central to the experience, understanding and validation of modernity as it is the economic system that drives the production of the new things like the electric guitars and computers. The valuing of newness, of change in itself,

appears to me a central ideological feature of modernity as expressed by Congolese musicians and their African fans, whether change, as in modernization theory, is an ameliorative or Western defined process or not.<sup>459</sup> It is the use of new technology, more than the mixing of different international elements or their production by a state regulated capitalist economy that for Kanda Bongo Man, one of Kinshasa's international musical stars, defined his music as being modern.

*-Do you think you can be modern and authentic at the same time?*

**Kanda** - Yes because you have to choose what is good from Europe and then from your area and combine them and then you can get something very very nice. Like on this CD I have one song I have written, sung by three girls from Soweto, they are singing in English but with their Zulu accent, I love that feeling, Oh my God it is something else.

*- So you are mixing (Yes!) the feel of South Africa with the English language (Yes!) with the sound of the Congo. So what does it mean to be modern to you? Is that a modern thing to do?*

**Kanda** - No. Modern for me is that you have a technology in front of you, everyday something new in technology for music. OK I have to follow the new technology. The question I am asking myself is 'How am I going to combine that new instrument coming into the music industry market, how

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<sup>459</sup> This is not the view accepted by Giddens. 'What is characteristic of modernity is not an embracing of the new for its own sake, but the presumption of wholesale reflexivity.' (1990: 39)



am I going to put in my own authentic local music, so that when you come to listen to it you are going to think ‘Wow! This is something else’. Like one day I was in Paris and one of my friends called me and he said you know that one day we are going to make music through the computers, I said are you crazy how could you make music with a computer? I said we cannot do live gigs, only recording. He said ‘No you can put it all in the computer through the keyboards and then go on stage’. I said ‘This is stupid; they are going to destroy the music like that’. I was angry. Then I wanted to record one of my songs called *Muchana*. When he wanted to use the computer I said ‘Are you going to spoil my music? I want people to play my music I don’t want any machine music’. He took all the music and put everything in the computer and it was my biggest seller. We just put on one guitar live and the vocals. Everything else was on the computer. (Interviewed in Manchester 18/11/04)

Another musician with a similar perception of the centrality of technology and change to what it means to be modern is the South African based musician Malcot Lowiso.

*- What does it mean to you to be modern. Can you be authentic and modern, African and modern at the same time?*

**Lowiso** – I don’t know exactly what modernisation means. Being modern is not the same as being European or American. Modernisation is a way of

living, of actualising yourself. If you take the France of Bonaparte and the France of Chirac they are not the same thing, or the United States of George Washington and today they are not the same they are modernised.

Everybody has their own way of realising themselves. Take somebody with a small house today they gradually make a bigger house. Or somebody with bare feet. He says I keep getting sharp stones in my feet so he starts thinking I need to cover my feet or to stop his body burning. Eventually after many years shoes are invented. Then he starts thinking it's so hard walking so far and eventually invents a bicycle. From that he eventually invents a car.

- *What about in music?*

**Lowiso** – It's about working out what people are wanting and developing your music as well as incorporating and using the latest technology.

- *It's the technology?*

**Lowiso** – It's not only the technology it's about moving the music forward. But the technology is very important. Imagine a studio without technology. What could you do. Look what's developed with computers. Modernisation doesn't mean having to dress like Occidentals, to talk like them or play music like them because we have our own clothes and music...

It is possible to modernise with authenticity. It is not a *return* to authenticity but *recourse* to authenticity, which means you turn to the best things in our

heritage. Like it is very important to show respect in Africa towards elders, to value them and obey them and address them properly. You can modernise without copying others. Look at the rumba of Oliviera, Wendo, Kalle Jeef. It has changed now but it is still our music a modernised authenticity, that is a recourse. We have modernised our authenticity without copying others, without copying the French or the Belgians. (Interviewed in Johannesburg 20/03/04)

The commodification of the music is taken for granted. That is not what is perceived as the primary indication of its modernity. It is the change brought about by new technology and its successful adaptation to Congolese cultural self-expression that is seen as what makes it modern. If one makes this break in an understanding of modernity from something defined by reflexivity or the capitalist and statist institutions serviced by organised science associated with Western modernity and see it instead as a disposition that validates change over continuity, whatever the balance between change and continuity in the actual historical process, then it is possible to start stripping the definition of its Euro-centric and imperialist implications. This disposition towards change has a strong association with the evolution and use of new technologies or means of production. This would leave the concept with more content than would appear in its use by those for whom 'modern society' appears to have become any contemporary society and modernization as any process of change within a contemporary society. This is how Daloz and Chabal (1999 and 2006) appear to retain the use of the concept without its teleological Western implications. This strips the idea of any analytical utility because it implies there are no

contemporary societies that are not modern. Thus for Daloz and Chabal ‘re-traditionalization’ can be construed as a form of modernization in Africa when it involves change, whether or not this is understood as such by the actors involved (Chabal and Daloz 1999: 46).<sup>460</sup> ‘Tradition’ and the traditionalist might likewise be re-habilitated, following my argument, as relating to dispositions that validate continuity over change. In the historical process continuity and change sit in tension with each other just as traditionalist and modernist dispositions could and do co-exist in the same person or social group.<sup>461</sup> This tension has been key to the creativity of Congolese musicians and their international success I would suggest. This in effect subverts the colonial cultural project, in which the modern and the traditional (urban/rural, Africa/Europe, elite/mass etc.), are set up in opposition to each other, and ‘heals the split representation of the self’ by uniting them in a single musical form (Devisch 1996: 571). The phrase quoted comes from Devisch, who makes the same claim for the role of the Pentecostal churches in Kinshasa bringing together these antimonies in the realm of the sacred; the holy spirit unites the Christian and Ancestral and provides an alternative moral framework to the mirage of formal employment and consumer abundance associated with ‘modernization’ when defined by Western society’s image of itself. De Boeck discusses the way the physical

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<sup>460</sup> Beyond this how these writers wish to define modernity is opaque and largely posed in terms of what it is not, ‘development’ or ‘Westernization’ for instance, claiming only that it is a ‘dynamic process’ rather than a ‘fixed state’. Chabal and Daloz (1999: 145)

<sup>461</sup> The implication of this argument is that the analytic use of the terms modernist and traditionalist are only relevant to the dispositions of social actors within any society of any age. There is no such thing as a ‘modern’ or ‘traditional’ society, or modernization for that matter, only societies within which traditionalist and modernist dispositions come into being. In this sense capitalism, bureaucratisation, democracy and the application of science are not the basis for defining a globally applicable model of human destiny, coded as modernization. When they are coded in this way then Turino’s view that an ideology that high jacks time is in the making holds. Instead these features of contemporary Western society can just as well become traditions to which people adhere. Following my argument their presence or absence do not make a society ‘modern’ or ‘traditional’ though their existence may result in part from and contribute to a modernist disposition.

spaces occupied by churches, the musicians who perform the music, and the musical forms used in the church and the bar occupy a common cultural space.<sup>462</sup> In the creative dissolution of the supposed opposition between tradition and modernity, continuity and change, an orientation or disposition defined by the past or future, a new realm is opened up freed from colonial definitions of time – this is the ‘euchronic time of ecstasy’ (Devisch 1996: 572). This possibility of an undivided self is very different from what Mbembe sees as the ‘endless interrogation of the possibility, for the African subject, of achieving a balance between his/her total identification with “traditional” (in philosophies of authenticity) African life, and his/her merging with, and subsequent loss in, modernity (in the discourse of alienation)’ or what he sees elsewhere as a choice between Afrocentricity or a divided self (Mbembe 2001: 12).

This creative healing in secular song and sacred ecstasy of the schizophrenic identity created by the colonists and neo-colonists ideology of Africa’s traditionalism as an inferior underside to Europe’s modernity, for all its spiritual worth, has not provided new urban pumping stations for clean water or built new drains for the physical as well as psychological health of the Kinois.

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<sup>462</sup> Personal communication (2006). De Boeck (2004: 95) also makes this point.



Chéri Samba 2004 *Ou Trouver L'Eau?*<sup>463</sup>

Devisch appears to sympathise with the idea amongst Kinois believers that praying will one day overcome the crisis of the state and its institutions and clean water will flow once again (Devisch 1996: 573).<sup>464</sup> Even if praying does not produce clean pumped water in Kinshasa, the role of the Kinois in the collapse of their own water supply infrastructure and their subsequent survival strategies still indicates a different trajectory from the rebuilding of state institutions as the basis of what water supply there is in Kinshasa, at least in the short term.<sup>465</sup> That said the creative healing and union embodied in Congolese music of what the colonists separated, especially in its euphoric live version, is, I would suggest, part of what has made it so attractive for Africans elsewhere on the continent.

<sup>463</sup> Chéri Samba's work can be seen on the website <http://galerie-herrmann.com/arts/samba/index.htm>. The detail of the text concerning the journey of the Kinois to Mars to find water can be seen on this site.

<sup>464</sup> Church communities, along with other forms of communalisation, do provide mutual assistance and so could be said to contribute to the distributive aspect of food security. See Tollens in Trefon (Ed.) (2004: 49-64) on food security in Kinshasa since 1990.

<sup>465</sup> See Trefon and Mwacan (2004: 33-46) on the looting of new machinery in pumping stations by citizens and the informal economy of water supply.

A second qualification is in order to Turino's theoretical framework. The face to face communities, with the 'alternative lifeways' Turino writes of in rural settings also exist in urban settings. Indeed these communities are the lifeblood of the vibrant urban music scene. Kinshasa's many 'villages', especially Matonge, provide the musical communities of fans and performers that make the scene really come to life, even if their 'lifeways' are framed to a greater extent by the state and market than a peasantry with a capacity to subsist. The commodification of labour and the expansion of the state's hegemonic pretensions do not suddenly result in the cessation of the desire for social living and to create community. Neither do they completely erase all cultural, political and socio-economic processes conducive to community in urban settings.<sup>466</sup> The spread of Congolese music owes much to the dynamic interplay of Kinshasa's musical communities. It is these communities that helped produce the music that was sponsored by the state and marketed by the marketeers. Four cultural forms, amongst others, can be identified as emanating from these communities and the interactions between performers and fans and these forms provided part of the appeal of the music abroad. These forms were new dances, new clothing styles, new language and new ways of bearing yourself in public and of making an impression.<sup>467</sup> It was the newness of the forms created by these communities, a newness that in no way precluded the integration of the 'traditional' or indigenous but actually celebrated that integration, that meant they were perceived as modern as much, maybe more, than any association with the state

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<sup>466</sup> One such process is the informal economy of communal water supply in the urban 'villages' of Kinshasa precisely because of the absence in much of the city of piped water managed by the state and or market brought about in part by the communal looting of pumping machinery.

<sup>467</sup> Refer to the sections on dance, fashion, language and bearing. Chapter 5:2 and 3.

and market or with particularly cosmopolitan dispositions as exemplified in the self reflection of Jean Serge Essous that opens this conclusion. BaKongo dances and melodies were used by Franco and Tabu Ley. Franco and Dr. Nico are famed for their adaptation of the likembe thumb piano and marimba for the guitar. Tshala Muana is identified by a dance and rhythm of the BaLuba called the Mutwashi. Many of the best known dances of urban bands are adaptations of dances with rural origins. Kazadi wa Mukuna (1992: 80) mentions the Tetela roots of Papa Wemba's dance *mokonyonyon*, the Mongo roots of Lita Bembo's *ekonda saccade* and Swede-Swede's *sunduma*, the Bantandu roots of OK Jazz's *mayeno* and the roots of the famous *kwasa kwasa* in Kongo social dance.<sup>468</sup> Zaiko is short for Zaire ya Bankoko, Zaire of our ancestors and Nkolo Mboka means village headman. Werra Son, *Le Roi du Fôret*, continues to espouse the same musical philosophy and uses old Congolese nursery rhymes to root his songs in the country. The incorporation of the 'traditional' continues to be celebrated.<sup>469</sup> These were the dispositions of the Kinois and Brazzavilleois, the people of the capitals, and those styles and dispositions spread from the two capitals to the Congo more generally via the media, the travels of musicians and the movement of people back and forth from the regions to the capital. All four of these elements continued to develop alongside the music and identified Congolese musicians abroad in Africa. The nightlife of Kinshasa and Brazzaville, driven by the atmosphere of particular streets and nightclubs, became the cultural factories owned by the workers that produced the continental export. Urbanisation itself, the exponential growth of Kinshasa's population and the street

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<sup>468</sup> For more on these dances and more see appendix 5.

<sup>469</sup> This is a small collection of specific examples of the more general influence of music with pre-colonial rural origins. A fuller musicological analysis of the connections between Congolese urban and rural music is desirable but beyond this study.



based communities these people created, provided as much of a stimulus as the state or market to the development of the music. Kanda Bongo Man moved to Kinshasa from the small town of Inongo on the border between what is now Bandundu and Equateur about 500 kilometres North East of Kinshasa. He describes how central each area was to the musical life of the capital. Kanda explains that when he arrived in Kinshasa practically every street would have its own band. He didn't learn music at school or in Church but amongst the innumerable bands that formed themselves on particular streets in particular areas.

**Kanda** - I was twelve years old when I moved to Kinshasa in 1967.

*-Where did you start singing? In the church, the school...?*

**Kanda** - Just with friends because what I can say is that Kinshasa has been a special town for music for a long time. In each and every little area, all over there, are groups, even each street. I was in Bandalungua. We had our own group in Bandalungua called Tao Tao. We used to play in David's bar. That was my first show; I was so young, when I was about 15. Then I went to join another group, Bella Mambo. I became the bandleader of that group.

*-So it wasn't in school or Church that you learnt but from the beginning in bands?*

**Kanda** -That's right. It was in the street that I learned. I was a student at that time, so I was doing my schoolwork as well. Soki was the boss but I was taking the calls, doing the business, organising rehearsals. (Interviewed in Manchester 18/11/04)

Mobhe Jhomos, who managed Thu Zaïna the band behind the emergence of Zaiko Langa Langa in the late 1960s from the new student class and returning students from Belgium, the *Belgicain*, described how the emergence of both these bands was related to the particular areas of Kinshasa where all the members lived, rehearsed, performed and created their *sieges*.<sup>470</sup> In Manda Tchebwa's extensive study into the history of Congolese music the village like nature of the different areas that make up Kinshasa and their influence on the music and fans is well documented.<sup>471</sup> The distinctions between these areas took on particular significance in the language and organisation of the "Bills" – youth gangs associated with different areas in the 1950s and 1960s. The name given to the Lingala slang they developed in their different territories, "Hindubill", was an amalgamation of the words from two avowedly

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<sup>470</sup> Thu Zaïna were based in Kalina/Gombe and Zaiko in the commune of Kalamu. Nyoko Longo is said to have been snubbed by the Kinois of Thu Zaïna as a new arrival in Kinshasa from Kisangani. (See the Congolese magazine VSM no. 30. 22/04/04 p.11 on this subject.)

<sup>471</sup> Tchebwa 1996:119-143. See also De Boeck (2004: 36-40) on Billism and the villagisation of Kinshasa. See Devisch (1996: 573) on the villagisation in Kinshasa and the role of ever more numerous Pentecostal churches. He claims that these churches 'subvert foreign models of modernity' (1996: 555) and help 'subordinate groups structure themselves along the lines of communes' (1996:574).

'The everyday struggle for survival in the towns, the collapse of public order and governmental institutions, a bankrupt economy, and the demise of public health care, education and transport services, all inspire impoverished man to deconstruct the modernist-evolutionist vision of global progress.' (1996: 556). This keys in with the way West and Ellen (1993) question the way what is seen as 'modern' or 'traditional' in the media are used by Africans in fashioning their present. 'any medium, whether originating in the so-called modern, popular, or traditional sectors of society, can be used on behalf of state power, in support of the program of modernity. Alternatively, any medium can be used to resist modernity, in the name of tradition that is symbolically constructed by people with interests vested in an alternate interpretation of present-day social relations and the path toward the future' (1993:110).

cosmopolitan film influences - Hindu from Bollywood and Bill, as in Buffalo Bill, from Hollywood Westerns.<sup>472</sup> The language itself was peculiarly local though, as was the invention of new words by such amalgamations. The attraction of Congolese music in Africa owes little to Hollywood or Bollywood and much to the street culture of Kinshasa and Brazzaville, a culture that produced the clothes, dances, language and attitude that mark out Congolese musicians on the road and on stage from other African urbanites. Again and again musicians and fans use the word modern to describe this music and culture rather than cosmopolitan. It is their version of modern, a modernity wrested from its exclusive association with Euro-American states and markets, with the homogenising teleology of modernist capitalism. Turino sets up one of those analytical oppositions like that between the traditional and the modern. He replaces this opposition with another, an opposition between the indigenous and the cosmopolitan. I would argue that the four principal historical forces of human organisation – the state, the market, institutionalised belief systems (science and religion) and face-to-face communities do not provide a basis for tidy binary distinctions.<sup>473</sup> For instance face-to-face communities based on small urban localities can produce new cultural products for the market that have a national character and bolster the state or church. The musical and local communities of Kinshasa did just that after independence in Zaire. The state, church and market can promote and protect the cultural life of face-to-face communities, as they also did at times in Mobutu's Zaire. The state can undermine the market, attack organised

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<sup>472</sup> See also the use of the same word but spelt 'Indubill' by Goyvaerts, who writes about Swahili slang in Bukavu with a similar role in the East. (Goyvaerts: Jun. 1995: pp. 299-314 )

<sup>473</sup> Civil Society is another possible candidate in this list that may require inclusion. Organised religion is included as part of the civil society category by the World Bank for instance, but I consider organised religion to have had a level of historical significance that justifies according it a distinct analytic space.

religion and destroy communities as the state in the hands of Mobutu also did. De Boeck writes of how as Kinshasa becomes more rural, more village like with the collapse of the formal economy, the rural becomes more 'urban' '...the place where dollars are generated, where the good life is shaped and where villages are transformed into booming diamond settlements, where life focuses on money and the consumption of women and beer'. (De Boeck 2004: 44) <sup>474</sup>

The globalizing and hegemonic tendencies of capitalism and the state must be recognised as tendencies, as is the continued evolution of new forms of community and organised religion. These are tendencies. Their complex interactions are not best understood by being placed in generalised binary oppositions with each other however intellectually attractive that may be, and even if in particular contexts they are best understood in this way, as may be the case in Zimbabwe. The duality I am suggesting only characterises two different dispositions, dispositions that can exist in the same person, especially in relationship to technological change.

This is not an attempt therefore to resuscitate the idea of modernity defined by a Eurocentric teleology. The collection of work in Barber (1997) on popular culture, and Palmberg and Kirkegaard (2002) on contemporary music, is built in part on the burial of the traditional/modern dyad as a useful analytic dichotomy. The version of modernity that is buried is however one that is defined by the Western and the elite. Barber uses Bayart's (1993) notion of extraversion as a way to talk about the African domestication of Western in modernity. She uses Mbembe's (1992) reflection on

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<sup>474</sup> On the fortunes made by young male Kinois diamond mining in the countryside and across the border in Angola see De Boeck (1998).

‘mutual zombification’ to question the idea that there is such a thing as separate ‘elite cultures’ that are modern in Africa and thereby displaces the idea of popular culture as a form of resistance to that elite rule. Rulers and ruled are both entwined in a common cultural space. Barber uses the ‘popular’ to bridge what she sees as the false dichotomy between the ‘traditional’ and the ‘elite’/‘modern’/‘Westernised’. ‘We should read it as something else it cannot accommodate: the shifting mobile, elusive space of the ‘popular’, which is in fact continuous with both the ‘traditional’ and the ‘modern’ categories and which deconstructs all the oppositions which sustain the binary paradigm’ (Barber 1997: 8).<sup>475</sup>

This rejection of the utility of the idea of the ‘modern’ is predicated on its understanding as Western and the province of the elite as well as deriving its meaning from a particular definition of its partner tradition, a conception that has a strong pedigree even if such a definition renders it redundant. If tradition is no longer defined as unchanging then its rejection as a descriptive category may be premature. The idea of tradition could still be used in the way it is used by musical practitioners to describe the relationship of Congolese music to the past, that is as something that can always feed the ‘modern’. This conception of ‘tradition’ appears to be well established and can be seen expressed in the work of a band like Swede

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<sup>475</sup> This is a theme that Barber develops and deepens in her celebration of Guyer’s work on the 500 year old *origin* of West African economies in the Atlantic interface with Europe, and how as such they ‘cannot be described as the articulation of two pre-existing sets of relations, capitalist and non-capitalist’. She uses this as a basis for a comparable assessment of the antiquity of a disposition towards syncretism in West and Central African cultural history (Barber 2007).

Swede in their self-conscious adoption of ‘rural’ acoustic instruments in an ‘urban’ electric dance band. This dynamic between the past and the present, continuity and change is best exemplified in Waterman’s well-known quotation of an informant ‘ours is a very modern tradition’.<sup>476</sup> Modernist and traditionalist dispositions are by no means mutually exclusive. Similarly if the definition of the modern is recognised as an area of contestation and subject to the agency of those who use the idea in Africa in developing its meaning, producing modernities in the plural, then it too may have its uses. The issue is how academics deal with the challenge posed by the use of categories they have rejected by the people about whom they write beyond resorting to the distance provided by inverted commas or the idea of false consciousness.

Modernity is a European cultural term with a specific ideological valence and a very particular history. It is not an analytic concept, let alone a universal standard of comparison among societies. Its export – in the civilizing mission of colonialism, in development schemes, in social scientific discourses – was part of the imperialism of that history, and the history of imperialism...The Western obsession with ‘tradition’, a relational construct, invented as the underside of modernity, dehistoricizes non-Europeans – and again posits an ideological trope as an analytic term. (Comaroff 2002: 130)<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> This quotation is one Waterman (1990) uses in discussing the Nigerian popular music *Jùjú*.

<sup>477</sup> Notice how ‘tradition’ acquires inverted commas whereas modernity escapes them.

Despite this rejection of the idea of modernity and tradition in the singular, and modernization along with it, John Comaroff goes on to allow for the creation of alternative African modernities. He sees these as being made by people with mutable but specific dispositions and from all the cultural materials thrown up by the historical process in particular places. This acceptance of the possibility of African modernities, implies however, some family resemblance that defines modernity in the singular in the grand manner attempted by Giddens (1991) even if we use a more limited basis for distinguishing a 'modernist' from a 'traditionalist' disposition of the sort I am suggesting – that is a modernist validation of change and a traditionalist validation of continuity - rather than the role of the state or of the market, or of life as a reflexive project to define 'modernity' writ large. The relative strength of these distinct dispositions must be distinguished from the way in which change and continuity are in fact universal features of any society. A society in which a traditionalist disposition is dominant may in fact experience more rapid change than one in which a modernist disposition is dominant. Our job then is to investigate how these dispositions come into being and their role in the making of perceived modernities.

An acceptance of the plurality of modernities should not blind us to features that are used with which to think the modern that different societies have in common. For instance in Congo, as in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, there has been a drive within urban popular culture towards the modern in which there are common features - the use of new technology, syncretic *bricolage*, the creation of new forms, and the validation of newness. These features are characteristic of the modernity associated

with the rise of capitalism and the nation state in Europe. These features have continued to characterise Congolese popular music while the dominant institutions associated with the Euro-American vision of 'modernity' (in the singular) have collapsed. This demonstrates how any definition of modernity as an historical condition needs still to be turned into the plural in order to include the varied outcomes of modernist dispositions. Parallel to the creation of the musical products of a modernist disposition in Congo, in the 1960s Mobutu's version of authenticity was imposed on what he renamed Zaire in 1971. The combination of the colonial ideology of fundamental cultural difference was used in conjunction with the Enlightenment ideology of universal rights and a common nationalist teleology by the colonised as a basis for claiming the right to self-determination (Chatterjee 1993; Bhabha 1994; Knöbl 2002:160).<sup>478</sup> This is where the overlap between the political and cultural is most apparent and is maybe the only significant part of Mobutuism that really found a resonance for the Congolese people and their musicians, however perverted by its relation to Mobutu's personality cult its implementation as a political programme became. The idea of recourse to authenticity, to which Mobutu attached himself, and which he used to name his own cultural revolution, is an idea that stands in tension with change and modernity, and it provided some of the tension that inspired Congolese musicians to invent more powerful syncretic music from indigenous as well as diasporic sources. The appeal to authenticity and the imposition of the authenticity policy was itself part of a 'modernist' project that extended state authority into the personal realm of clothes and names.<sup>479</sup> Mobutu

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<sup>478</sup> For more on how the different colonial powers played out this tension in policy and practice see Chapter 3: 2.

<sup>479</sup> Visits to China under Mao in 1973 and 1974 where the Cultural Revolution was in full swing and North Korea under Kim IL Sung in 1974 were sources of inspiration for Mobutu to extend and



was not alone, as Cabral and Fanon had warned, in his adoption of the dictatorial and self serving habits of the former colonists acting in effect as a ‘comprador nationalist bourgeoisie’ (Cabral 1980; Fanon 1986). Post-independence African politicians were in some ways far more constrained in their creativity than the artists. The forces of the international order defined by the cold war bore down heavily on them. Musicians could forge a balance between the recourse to authenticity and the drive towards a cosmopolitan modernity in their cultural project without the heavy breath of the IMF, the US ambassador or a Soviet military advisor upon them. The story of Mobutu’s rise to power and the assassination of Lumumba have the fingers of the Belgian, US and Soviet secret services all over it (Wrong 2000: 79. Nzongola-Natalaja 2002: 113-118. De Witte 2001).<sup>480</sup> Nyerere constantly played Eastern and Western patrons off against each other in an attempt to maintain some autonomy. Moi, like Kenyatta, tailored much domestic policy to the demands of the international financial system. Since 1994 Mandela and Mbeki have had to keep domestic policy on such issues as land reform within confines defined by the perceived need to retain the confidence of international investors in South Africa. The rise of the musicians Franco Makiadi and Tabu Ley in Kinshasa after independence remained untouched by the interference of such foreign powers, lying as it has in an area of little interest to them. So left alone the music has flourished

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‘radicalise’ the programme. Ndaywel è Nziem (1998: 684). The title authenticity was taken from the Guinean leader Sékou Touré’s cultural policy that predated Mobutu’s by a decade. See the chapter 2: 4 on authenticity.

I have put modernist in inverted commas here in order to indicate that despite Mobutu’s attraction to certain aspects of state dominated communism in the East this is still a modernity and modernism in the Euro-American guise to the extent that it is defined by the dominant role of the state and market rather than a particular disposition. That the dominant role of the state and market is closely connected to that disposition towards change tends to confuse the matter.

<sup>480</sup> The film *Lumumba* (2001) also gives an account based on the recent investigation by the Belgians of their role in his murder.

independently. As for Europeans only some Greek businessmen and a Belgian jazz guitarist assume important roles in the music plot before independence.<sup>481</sup>

There is one other field that I will attempt to address in this conclusion. That is the appeal of Congolese music across the socio-economic spectrum and how the generation of creativity within the field of music relates to conflicts between state and society and disparities in power and wealth.<sup>482</sup> Amongst the best writings on popular culture in Africa are those of Johannes Fabian (Fabian 1978; 1998). He has attempted to understand the nature and role of popular culture in Sub Saharan Africa at a general level. Inevitably any such attempts are open to accusations of over generalisation but fortunately for the purposes of this study the fieldwork he has based his generalisations upon were conducted in Zaire in the Katanga region. Fabian makes two important points in his work. The first is how the idea of popular culture makes visible a field of social practice that otherwise remains invisible and ignored by social theorists.<sup>483</sup> He sees the exclusion of popular culture from social theory in Africa to have arisen for this reason. 'Social theory, being concerned with order and identity, was at a loss when it came to dealing with the anarchic disrespect

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<sup>481</sup> The role of record companies in diffusing that cultural productivity is obviously crucial. When there has been any dirty business, say in the relationship with French and Belgian record companies, most notably Sonodisc, this has had little impact on the development of the scene in Kinshasa. The most significant impact of other forces on music has been in the general collapse of the state and the economy in the course of the last twenty years.

<sup>482</sup> I use socio-economic in a limited sense as I do not deal here with the appeal of the music across all lines of social cleavage. For instance though there has been work done on the relationship of women to Congolese popular music this has primarily been concerned with gender roles and the domination, with some notable exceptions, of bands by men (Gondola 1997: 65-84) and their representation in song (Biaya 1996) rather than an investigation of the music's appeal to women. This requires further investigation as does the appeal in rural areas.

<sup>483</sup> In his work Fabian (1998) has chosen to stick with the word 'culture', like Bourdieu, against the trend initiated by Foucault to use 'discourse'.

for rules and the self-mockery that were cultivated by urban Africans, not only in their way with languages'. (Fabian 1998: 8)

Fabian goes on to reveal how it was just such social theory that blinded him to popular culture in his early work in the Katanga region of Zaire on *Jamaa*, a religious movement (Fabian 1971). He would be so focused on *Jamaa* teaching in his conversations, that he was deaf to the constant sound of Zairian music and blind to the clothes people wore and the pictures on their walls. Fascination with stable culture and social structure throws fast changing popular music into darkness. A focus on 'tradition' - can, ironically, kill the history of the present. The more recent guises of that search for order and stability - grammar, discourse, text and narrative - still obscure a central feature of popular culture and this leads to the second point. The second point, and the heart of Fabian's argument, is his attempt to establish the centrality of freedom to popular culture. This is a particular sort of freedom, one that is wrested in the face of oppression and is in this sense a freedom that is contingent and deeply political. He qualifies the sort of freedom he is talking about in relation to popular culture with three thoughts.

Culture can be the source of individual freedom in situations of collective oppression, and the most significant achievement of popular culture may be to create collective freedom in situations where individual freedom is denied or limited. (Fabian 1998:19)

...elite-high culture is not a priori more free than mass-popular culture; conversely, expressions of popular culture are not in themselves liberating. Both assume such qualities only as part of a concrete historical *praxis*. The problem of freedom poses itself *within*, not only *between*, high and popular, dominant and dominated culture. (Fabian 1998:20)

If freedom is conceived not just as free will plus the absence of domination and constraint, but as a potential to transform thoughts, emotions, and experiences into creations that can be communicated and shared, and if “potential,” unless it is just another abstract condition like absence of constraint, is recognised by its realisations, then it follows that there can never be freedom as a state of grace, permanent and continuous....freedom cannot be anything but contestatory and discontinuous and precarious. Freedom, in dialectical parlance, comes in moments. (Fabian 1998: 21)

Fabian is quoted here at length because his conception of freedom is so challenging for the academic mind when compared with the more structuring and stable focus on power, discourse and narrative.<sup>484</sup> The grounding of that creativity is not just in over-coming the cultural consequences of colonialism and its aftermath. It is also in the quality of the music that was created by particular bands and individual musicians.

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<sup>484</sup> This focus has been inspired by the work of Foucault, especially 1967 and 1977.

One point needs to be made to qualify Fabian's understanding, which holds for many of those following Scott who see popular culture through the lense of social hierarchy (Scott 1990). One of the distinguishing features of African popular culture, distinguishing at least from Europe rather than Asia or Latin America, is its relationship to social inequality and oppression. Bourdieu has produced one of the most systematic and probably expensive studies of the social determinants of taste, in this case French taste, by class and gender (Bourdieu 1989). Bourdieu establishes statistically what distinguishes the tastes of these groups, whether for hats or political parties. By contrast Mbembe has argued for an understanding of postcolonial society, drawn from Cameroon, in which social divisions between 'elite' and 'people' mask a deeper level where the division is in practice played out in a process of 'mutual zombification' that leaves both impotent (Mbembe 1997; 2001: 104).

The postcolonial relationship is not primarily a relationship of resistance or of collaboration but can best be characterised as illicit cohabitation, a relationship made fraught by the very fact of the *commandement* and its 'subjects' have to share the same living space. (Mbembe 1992: 4)

For Mbembe the dominant and the dominated are inscribed 'within the same episteme' (Mbembe 1992: 10). This position is a curious mirror image of the Weberian standpoint of Chabal and Daloz for whom the state in Africa is dominated by society, in the sense that it has largely failed to establish the functional autonomy of the civil service from neo-patrimonial social pressures (Chabal and Daloz 1999: 4-

8).<sup>485</sup> Chabal and Daloz (1999: 40-43) suggest classes defined by a consciousness of collective interest do not exist 'objectively' in Africa because vertical ties of patronage are stronger than any horizontal ties of social class. For instance they suggest that ostentation and public displays of wealth by patrons, or 'big men', are used by clients as markers of their own as well as their patron's status and power, a point that should be remembered in relation to the ostentation of Congolese musicians in their video clips, alongside the performance of power by politicians and business women. Although Mbembe is writing with broad strokes and is not singularly focused on popular culture what he would accept as an act of resistance is not clear from his argument. He himself writes that in the postcolony, extrapolating from Cameroonian state practice, 'all verbal dissidence, whether written or sung, is the object of close surveillance and repression' (Mbembe 1992: 17). How then are we to distinguish between Wole Soyinka, Fela Kuti and Franco Makiadi, the dissident and the praise singer, in their relationship to the state? Even if there are 'myriad ways ordinary people guide, deceive, and toy with power instead of confronting it directly' and the dominated feign obedience and belief in the regime of power only in order better to manipulate when the opportunity arises this does not mean *all* resistance and dissidence is somehow inevitably co-opted and put at the service of a morbid and sterile dance of death between the rulers and the ruled

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<sup>485</sup> The 'emancipation of the state' implies the separation of the private and public realms by institutional norms – meritocratic appointments, the independence of the judiciary, the use of public resources for public expenditure etc. – as against a neo-patrimonial distribution of appointments and resources according to personal bonds of loyalty or kinship. They see the mask of bureaucratic norms being for the purposes of maintaining international credibility and finance, even if such a state is seen as a hybrid or domesticated *a la* Bayart. They make the crucial point that the kind of functionally independent civil service democratically accountable to citizens upon which a Eurocentric definition of 'modernity' is in part predicated was never established by European colonial regimes in Africa. One might add that the instrumental manipulation and amplification of ethnicity by the colonists as devices of their rule as against the attempt at the nationalist erasure of ethnic diversity by 19<sup>th</sup> century European states are historical facts which are part of the explanation for the contrast in the enduring hold of patrimonial politics in Africa and their relative decline in Europe.

(Mbembe 1992: 25). Ediabe, talking about growing up in Cameroon's capital Yaoundé, made the more straight forward and compelling observation that if he went into a poor part of town, to a cheap eating place for the workers, and then up the road to an expensive one for the elite he would hear the same Congolese music and eat the same food but through better speakers and served on a better plate.<sup>486</sup> The only other difference would be that he had to pay more for it. That same music could also be heard in small towns and villages on cheap transistor radios, thus crossing the rural urban divide as well as wealth divides in town. Whether this amounts to 'mutual zombification' is less clear than that the distinction between elite and popular culture does not hold in his experience in Cameroon. Though Mbembe is not addressing himself directly to the subject of popular culture the relationship of Congolese music to modernist and traditionalist dispositions in Africa appears more significant in understanding its appeal than zombification. The project of overcoming the colonial cultural legacy and the schizophrenic consequences of the failed modernist project in its Western garb is not necessarily something that divides those with and without formal power.

The fact that Congolese musicians have come from all over the Congo basin and from across the social spectrum, from 'respectable' and educated families in the case of Joseph Kabesele and Tabu Ley and a poor family in the case of Franco Makiadi for instance, may have helped in the appeal of their music across that same social spectrum. Musicians were regarded as *voyou* (ruffians) because of their association with nightlife, Billism, alcohol and prostitution, whatever the reality of their lives.

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<sup>486</sup> Interviewed in Cape Town 28/06/02.

What appears more important though, for the spread of the music, is the way in which musical taste has not been used to define 'class' in urban Africa and so the whole urban spectrum has been open to the Congolese musical entrepreneurs.<sup>487</sup> In addition Congolese musicians described how they could also make good money in the countryside, in southern Sudan for instance, setting up gigs using generators. As mentioned battery powered transistor radios have brought the recorded versions of the music to rural dwellers.

**Ntone** - The rich people in Cameroon will listen to the same music as the poor people. They won't drive the same cars, they won't live in the same house, and they won't wear the same clothes. But the pop, the culture it's the same one. If Pépé Kallé is big in the Congo he is big both for Mobutu's aids and the people in the districts. That's the way it works. In Cameroon, we have *Sekoui*, in Kinshasa they have *Nganda* (Bars). Now you have *Nganda* in which the poor people will go because the beer is cheaper, the food is cheaper and you will have *Nganda* in which the rich people go because the beer is more expensive, the food is more expensive. You will get this particular fish in this *Nganda* and you will get the same fish in that other *Nganda* just more expensive. And the rich will go there because the poor can't go there. But it's the same fish. It's the same music being played in both *Nganda*, in the ghetto and in the suburb. So as Franco is being played through a cassette here and through a CD player over there but it's still Franco. (Interviewed in Cape Town 28/06/02)

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<sup>487</sup> See appendix 6 for more evidence of this broad social origin.



This foray into some theoretical concerns about the nature of popular culture should not distract us from the monumental achievements of Congolese musicians and their fans over the last fifty years in creating an African popular culture worthy of the name. That is the central concern of this study. When we focus exclusively on the failed political and economic projects of ‘modernity’ in its Western garb in Africa recognition of this achievement can easily disappear. It is an achievement that has been wrested from what in these realms appears to be a vice-like grip of colonial and neo-colonial history, a grip the politicians of Africa have found it so hard to escape. Characterising the music as a cultural opiate for the politically and economically oppressed and the musicians as mouthpieces of their oppressors is to miss this point. Political and economic liberation will not be achieved from the sound of a guitar any more than it will now from the barrel of a gun. That this music sprang from the country in Africa that experienced the first genocide of the twentieth century and one that subsequently experienced one of the most brutal and de-humanising of colonial regimes is symbolically apt. Equally important for the history of that creation has been the capacity of African fans to resist the dominating forces of the global culture industries of the West, beyond the confines of the nationalist protectionism that pays so little heed to the rest of Africa that now characterises the South African response. While political and economic life in many parts of Africa is characterised by so little security or freedom musical creation provides the cultural resources for self-affirmation and positive forms of identity lacking in these realms. Tracing how the music of Congo went on to be the one form that took on a truly Pan-African status I hope provides a tribute not only to the work of Congolese musicians but also to the

supra-national and supra-ethnic aesthetic sensibilities of the African fans that supported them.

## **Appendix 1: Recorded Interviews**

These interviews vary in word length from three to ten thousand words and the transcripts will be lodged in the University of Edinburgh library.

| <b>Name</b>                | <b>Place</b>         | <b>Date</b> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Allingham, Rob             | Johannesburg         | 08/04/04    |
| Assossa, Tshimanga Kallala | Dar es Salaam        | 20/03/02    |
| Bangui Bayo, Herman        | Brazzaville          | 21/09/05    |
| Bitshoumanou, Francis      | Brazzaville          | 21/09/05    |
| ‘Brazzos’ Armando Antoine  | Kinshasa             | 07/10/05    |
| Blumenfield, Nicky         | Johannesburg         | 01/04/04    |
| Chege, Simon               | Cheltenham, UK       | 06/03/04    |
| Chunda, Yusuf Omar         | Stone Town, Zanzibar | 10/04/02    |
| Dajustice, Justo           | Cape Town            | 29/03/04    |
| Coplan, David              | Johannesburg         | 03/03/04    |
| Djeskin                    | Cheltenham, UK       | 06/03/04    |
| Doyle, Anon                | Johannesburg         | 06/04/04    |
| Felician                   | Stone Town, Zanzibar | 04/03/02    |
| Essous, Jean Serge         | Brazzaville          | 21/09/05    |
| Fylla, Saint-Eudes Mfulla  | Brazzaville          | 21/09/05    |
| Heibrunn, Darryl           | Johannesburg         | 24/03/04    |
| Jhimmy (Clouds FM)         | Dar es Salaam        | 18/03/02    |
| Kalala, Isidore Kabongo    | Kinshasa             | 27/09/05    |
| Kayembe, Kaloji Wa Musongo | Johannesburg         | 06/04/04    |

Kanda Bongo Man - Manchester 18/11/04 (8,169)

Kanyinda, Coco – London 06/03/04

Kasheba, Ndala - Dar Es Salaam 20/03/02

Kassongo wa Kanema – Nairobi 020/03/02

Kibanza, Euani Kabila - Nairobi 16/04/02

Kibens, Professor Jules – Johannesburg 25/93/04

Kibisingo, Douglas - London 28/01/05

Kidicho, David – Johannesburg 18/03/04

Kilambe, Richard – Johannesburg 21/03/04

Kumalo, Melvyn – Johannesburg 30/03/04

Legum, Colin - Cape Town 26/06/02

Lesasa, Bilenge - Nairobi 15/04/2002

Liwoso, Malcot – Johannesburg 20/03/04

Lumumba, Otis Tabesenge - Middlesborough 18/11/04.

Madilu, Bialu – Dar es Salaam 19/03/02

Makanda, Ngiam Noel ‘Werra Son’ - Kinshasa 14/09/05

Manana, Gabisile – Johannesburg 29/03/04

Mandjeku, Dizzy – Glasgow 27/10/04

Mangwana, Sam – Glasgow 27/10/04

Manzenza - Brazzaville 25/09/2005

Maryse – Johannesburg 25/03/04

Massa, Bumba – Cheltenham, UK 06/03/04

Massengo, Loko. – Cheltenham, UK 06/03/04

Massengo, Max – Brazzaville 21/09/05

Mayanda, Blaise ‘Wuta Mayi’ – Cheltenham, UK 06/03/04

Mbenza, Syran - Cheltenham, UK 06/03/04

Mbhele, Lorraine – Johannesburg 29/03/04

Mobhe Lisuku Jhomos – Kinshasa 19/09/05

Motumba - Johannesburg 20/03/04

Mpango, Kikumbi Mwanza ‘King Ki Ki’ – Dar es Salaam 17/03/02

J.B. Mpiana – Johannesburg 25/03/04

Mpisi, Baldwin – Johannesburg 06/04/04

Mthembu-Salter, Gregory – Cape Town 01/05/04

Mthembu-Salter, Lindiwe – Cape Town 01/05/04

Mthembu, Peter – Cape Town 03/05/04

Muana, Tshala – Kinshasa 14/09/05

(Also interviewed by Mthembu-Salter - Kinshasa 07/10/04)

Mutta, Felician – Stone Town, Zanzibar 04/03/02

Mutumbo, Dolus – Johannesburg 28/04/04

Ndrango, Jim – Nairobi 12/04/02

Ngaira, Amos – Nairobi 10/04/02

Ntone, Edjiabe - Cape Town 28/06/02

Nwamba, Richard – Johannesburg 07/04/04

Nyoshy – Dar es Salaam 15/03/02

Onda, Arcel (Raga TV) – Johannesburg

Ongala, Remmy – Dar es Salaam 07/03/02

Orderson, Crystal – Cape Town 26/04/04.

Paramoer, Eugene - Johannesburg 21/07/04

Pulusu, Abel Homban - Brussels 03/01/05

Roitelet Munganya – Kinshasa 07/10/05

Shabani, Gabriel (Congo Web TV) 21/09/05

Sibiya, Linda – Johannesburg 29/03/04

Sithole, Sippo – Johannesburg 06/04/04

Swinnock, Martin – Brighton, UK 10/08/04

Tabu Ley ‘Rochereau’ - Kinshasa 12/10/05

Tarfar (manager of Bana OK) – Kinshasa 25/09/05

Themba (Producer of Ezodumo) – Johannesburg 07/04/04

Tshi Tshi Tresor - Kinshasa 21/09/05

Verckys, Kiamuangana Mateta - Kinshasa 24/09/05

‘Viking’, Nguza Mbangu - Dar es Salaam 02/03/14

Vinny, DJ - Johannesburg 26/03/04

## **Appendix 2.**

### **Additional Interview Material**

Full transcripts of these interviews have been lodged in the University of Edinburgh Library. This selection has been chosen to give an idea of the style of interview rather than because they are representative of the interviews as a whole. They only include portions of the interviews except the Kanda Bongo Man interview. The choice of interviews includes two musicians based in Europe – Kanda Bongo Man and Wuta Mayi, one in Kenya, Kassongo wa Kanema, one veteran historian and writer Colin Legum living in Cape Town at the time of the interview, the veterans ‘Brazzos’ Armando Antoine and Roitelet Munganya from the time of the birth of recorded Congolese popular music in Kinshasa and Madilu, but of the next generation. Reasons of space prohibit including any more interviews. Most of the interviews are between five and ten thousand words.

**Colin Legum - Cape Town 26/06/02**

Legum described to me the incredible scene he witnessed in Southern Sudan in the early sixties when a Congolese band came via Uganda. There was no electricity so they ran their amplifiers off generators they brought with them .

**Legum** - I first came across them in Uganda and later in Southern Sudan, exiles after the fall of Lumumba. There was an exodus in 1962 after Lumumba's fall. There is a border with Sudan but the transport is better via Uganda. That border with Sudan is wild.

- *When you saw them playing in Southern Sudan was it popular?*

**Legum** - It was like the Beatles come to town. Tremendous. They set up their nightclubs. .

- *What do you think made the music so popular there?*

**Legum** - Well it's new.

- *Were they playing bass, drums, electric guitars?*

**Legum** - Oh yes.



- *So I suppose that was all new in Southern Sudan. They'd never seen bands like that before.*

**Legum** -Yes. They were living in exile making a living. The breakthrough in Uganda was more difficult because it had its own music business and nightclub scene, so they had to break in. In Sudan there was no competition. I mean they converted the music in Uganda.<sup>488</sup>

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<sup>488</sup> Cape Town 10/02/ 2002

## **‘Roitelet’ and ‘Brazzos’. Kinshasa 07/10/05**

‘Roitelet’ and ‘Brazzos’ were founder members of OK Jazz in 1956 and before that moved between the Greek studios that first recorded and made Congolese popular in Africa. Brazzos was a bass player and Roitelet a guitarist.

### **‘Brazzos’ Armando Antoine**

**Brazzos** - We start with the song and then the guitar. The rights of the author belong entirely to the songwriter even though the whole group help compose the musical arrangement but you can’t split the rights. SONECA has existed for thirty years with these serious errors. In the 1950s and 1960s we can lay the fault at the foot of the government, the ministry that directed SONECA. They fleeced us. I wrote SABAM to complain they never paid us from Belgium and they replied they couldn’t pay us because SONECA never paid for the use of foreign music here.

*- It strikes me that musicians are not united enough to create an organisation.*

**Brazzos** - The musicians today are not that interested in collaborating with us. In the days of African Jazz there was antagonism but we still formed a community for these purposes.

*- When did you started touring with African Jazz?*

**Brazzos** - After independence we started travelling to West Africa a lot. We went to Mali before independence in the 1950s. We played in bars there.

1958 we found bodies in the road after our concerts. They were laid out drunk. Here we played in white bars with Bill Alexandre despite the segregation because we were with a white man. That was exceptional. You played and then you had to retreat to the kitchen. You couldn't stay in the bar with the whites drinking in town. You couldn't drink. After we finished Bill paid for our fares home, or we went in a lorry from the hotel with the police around midnight and he carried on playing. We played bolero, tango, European music, French music which he taught us and some Congolese music. We weren't paid much but the expatriates supported the music in recording and archiving.

*- Did the Belgians use the music for propaganda?*

**Brazzos** - No they never got us to do what Mobutu did just educational songs when there was a disaster. It wasn't the Belgians who toured Wendo and Olivier it was the Greeks and Jews with Ngoma and Opika in the early 1950s, 1952. After that they started singing in Lingala in the East and South.

*- Why do you think other countries like Lingala songs?*

**Brazzos** – It's the rhythm. I didn't go to Mali in the 1950s with African Jazz but after. Before that we went to Central Africa and Gabon. There in Mali and Gabon they had deputies, *bourgemeister* elected to the parliament like in France. Here we

had nothing. They mixed more with the whites there. In Gabon it worked well there was less division it was different. We could mix with whites in Bangui and in Gabon.

*- Did the musicians try and learn your way of playing there?*

**Brazzos** - Yes they tried but they couldn't get really get it.

*- When you travelled with African Jazz before independence would you find Congolese musicians already there?*

**Brazzos** - There were some there. Bowane went ahead to Ghana, Benin, Cote D'Ivoire, Lomé, Mali and Togo all those villages and Ry-Co went too but Bowane took a whole load of musicians over there first and stayed over there a lot.

*- So it was him who did the first tours then. Did African Jazz ever travel to East Africa?*

**Brazzos** - African Jazz did but after I left the band with 5 others Dr. Nico, Dechaud his older brother Tino Baroza, Albino Kalombo, and the saxophonist Isaac Musekiwa we formed an orchestra. We had problems with authors rights and Kabasele took back Tino Baroza and they went to Bangui and Europe to record. That's when Tino Baroza went to Cameroon with Manu Dibango. People here think

a Cameroonian musician was behind his death, that's what the Congolese who were with him say.

*- Who were the most important guitarists for the Congolese?*

**Brazzos** - Jhimmy was the precursor, the revolutionary. Jhimmy came with his Hawaiian tone and everybody started playing like that and tuning their guitars like that. Tino Baroza learnt that from him. All the guitarists learnt from him and wanted to play like that. Baroza and Dr. Nico could play like that. Today they don't know how to play like that only Roget Lokoomou who plays like that with a capo but Jhimmy could play like that by hand. Luambo couldn't play like that to begin with but he learnt in Dewayon's band. It was great. You put the Mi, the top string in the place of sol (D string). A terrible sound, phenomenal. I don't know how he created that. The high priest Jhimmy, he was phenomenal. He was from Brazzaville where he trained in a seminary.

*- What did the Congolese think of Jimmy Rogers at that time?*

**Brazzos** - Wendo learnt his yoddlng style from Jimmie Rogers. We all liked Jimmy Rogers. We like Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet later Aretha Franklin. We could play that. It was fabulous I can assure you.

*- Tino Rossi?*

**Brazzos** - That was fabulous. Kabesele learnt from that style. Also from Patrice and Mario. French singers were also popular. Then a Belgian came over called 'Fud' Candrix (A jazz saxophone player brought to Leopoldville to play in a hotel opened by Sabena to accommodate Europeans using the regular flights they started in 1935. Stewart 2000: 40)

**Roitelet Munganya.**

Below is a portion of an important interview not included in the main text.

- *Who was the first Congolese musician to tour the country?*

**Roitelet** - Paul Kamba, from Brazzaville, came here often. He didn't play guitar. He sang with maracas and drums. He was an intellectual. He had his own orchestra Victoria Brazza. Wendo started out as griot with his guitar so Kamba was different with his orchestra. They started out in the same era at the same moment. Wendo formed Victoria Kinshasa later. My first orchestra was called Section B before African Jazz with Jhimmy. Then we started playing in the CEFA studio, me Brazzos, Roger Izeidi, Vicky Longomba and that was the CEFA studio band, orchestra CEFA. We played in bars like *Bar Congo*. That band was supported by Bill Alexandre who arrived in 1953. He was the first to arrive with an electric guitar. We called it 'the guitar that speaks'. It was a Roger guitar. At that time we didn't own our instruments it was the studios that owned them. We put a pick up in acoustic guitars and plugged that into amplifiers, Jeloso amps. The first Congolese guitarists used acoustic guitars.

When we saw Bill we started using those pickups. African Jazz was the first to use amplified guitars around 1954. That was made up Vicky Longomba, Nyamba Nyamba Albert Termauni, Dr. Nico, Dechaud Mwamba, 'Depuissant' (See Stewart 2000: 46 for more). I took over in the orchestra from Taumani when he stayed in the studio. When we played in bars or promotions we borrowed the instruments from CEFA. We played for two years then in 1953

### **Madilu Bialu 'System' - Dar es Salaam 19/03/02**

Madilu is an important figure who has spanned the last three generations and sung with the two musical and in the case of Franco physical giants, Tabu Ley and Franco Luambo Makiadi. He sang some of the most memorable of the songs ever produced by OK Jazz; including the monstrous hit *Mario* and its sequel towards the end of Franco's life in 1987. Madilu has had his own band 'Madilu System' since he left the band OK Jazz that kept going after Franco's death, around 1993. The following portion of an interview with Madilu gives an idea of the extent of the travels of the main bands. Remembering the details of so many tours was difficult for Madilu.

*- When did you start out in the music?*

**Madilu** - I started out in 1970 in Kinshasa with Papa Noel in a group called Bangula, and then I moved to Bakuba with Pépé Kallé in 1972 when we founded that group. Then I founded a group with my friends, we were a trio, Madilu and Yossa Pindu, called Bakuba Ma OK. Then I moved to Afrisa International with Tabu Ley in 1978, then in 1980 I moved to OK Jazz with Franco until his death in 1989. Then I carried on with Simaro and the band for four years. They started Bana OK when I left.

*- This is probably difficult to remember but can you tell me where you have been in Africa with your groups?*



**Madilu** - Me, I have played with my group in Zambia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Burkina, Mali, Congo Brazza, and Gabon.

That's all with the Royaume Madilu System.

- *Did you travel with OK Jazz?*

**Madilu** - Yes, yes. With OK Jazz! We travelled too much in those days. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Central Africa, Gabon, Benin, Togo, Burkina, Congo Brazza... where else now, oh yes Madagascar.

- *Franco went to Madagascar!? Was he popular there?*

**Madilu** - But of course. Franco was popular everywhere in Africa.

- *Did you travel with Tabu Ley?*

**Madilu** - Only to Dakar.

- *Did it work there in Dakar?*

**Madilu** - Oh yes it worked, because I'd already been to Dakar with Franco.

- *Did you start travelling as far back as 1970?*

**Madilu** - That was when I was with Papa Noel. We went to Algeria. That was the first journey of my life.

- *What was that for?*

**Madilu** - It was for a Pan African festival.

- *Where in Africa has it worked best for you?*

**Madilu** - It's worked everywhere in Africa. The four corners of Africa, East, West, South, Central. Everywhere.

- *Senegal, Mali?*

**Madilu** - There its *trop grave*. Senegal, Mali, Abidjan, Burkina. In every case there it works too well. *Trop même fort*.

- *Nigeria and Ghana?*

**Madilu** - Nigeria the same. I just spent a week there. Our CD is selling well. I didn't go to play but I saw that Congolese music is selling well. Ghana too it works well. I was just invited to play there with my group but I couldn't because I was already booked to play in the US.



**Blaise Mayanda 'Wuta Mayi' - Cheltenham, UK 06/03/04**

Wuta Mayi is of the same generation as Malidu, born in the early 1950s. He differs in that he was at the forefront of the scene that developed in Paris in the 1980s as a member of Les Quatres Étoiles (QE).

1967 Jamel National (Future Trio Madjesi members)

1968 Orchestre Bamboula (w. Papa Noel)

1971 Orchestre Continental

1974 TPOK

1982 Les Quatres Étoiles. (With Bopol, Syran Mbenza and Nyboma.)

- *Why do you think that Congolese music became more popular than the music of all other African countries in Africa?*

**Wuta Mayi** - The question that you ask me there, I think it dates from way back, it wasn't always like that. Congolese music was lucky *dans l'époque*, from the time when the colonists came *chez nous*. We were lucky to get good producers who came to us, Greeks, who propagated our music outside our own country.

- *It was them, you think?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes, because we saw studios, production plants for records all that come into being.

- *So it wasn't the music?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes, the music is the base. It exists. But we were lucky that we had the good producers who communicated the music outside.

- *You don't think that it's something there in the music that other Africans found more attractive (seduisant, attrayant), with more ambiance than other African music?*

**Wuta Mayi** - That also but you know me personally I think that melodically we are very good workers, because you know among us first and foremost melody is something that is very, very important. I don't know the others in their cultures. That's not to say that Congolese music is the best. No, no, no. The first, as I told you, is that we had people who supported our music.

- *But after the Greeks were there others who supported the music as well as the Greeks in the sixties?*

**Wuta Mayi** - In the fifties, sixties, forties. I would say music in the time of my parents was well supported by their producers, as well as the fans of music.

- *What tours did you do with Franco?*

**Wuta Mayi** - I know that in 1978 we did a tour of Belgium. That was the first tour in Europe.

*-How about in Africa?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Ohhh. Brazzaville. Central Africa. Gabon. Many countries. We went often. After our return from Belgium we left for Cameroon in 1978. We played either in big halls or stadiums. We didn't do any tours in 1974.

*- Who organised these tours?*

**Wuta Mayi** - What like Cameroon? It wasn't stipulated. It was the hotel.

*- Was it Manzenza?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Manzenza was the group's manager. He didn't necessarily organise the tours he came along with us when we travelled. But we were always invited by the different promoters in each country. It depended. Sometimes by the state. Two times we were invited to Gabon by the state. That was by a man called M'Bongo who was the Minister of Information.

*- So it was him who telephoned the band to invite you to come?*

**Wuta Mayi** - No the second time it was organised by the minister responsible for internal security.

*- So it could be anybody in the government who could invite you?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Oh you know it was something that became a sort of 'business' for them.

*- Because they could make money getting you over and charging for the concerts?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes

*- After Gabon?*

**Wuta Mayi** - First we did Cameroon, then Gabon. In 1978 we did, if my memory serves me right, we did, Doula, Youambe, Douala.

*- Was that with a private promoter?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes. In 1979 we went to Morocco, then Belgium then France. France to DRC. Before going to Europe we went to Angola, to Luanda.

*- Wasn't there a war at that time?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes here and there but it didn't stop us from going. There was security.

Then we went to Ivory Coast in 1981. Bumba Massa and Syran (*Mbenza. Other musician friends and future members of Les Quatre Étoiles*) were there at that time in the Ivory Coast.

- *Was that in a stadium?*

**Wuta Mayi** - No that was in a big hall to begin with in the Hôtel Ivoire. After that we played in a stadium.

- *Were there many people then?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Of course. It was like a football match. Many people. After that in 1981 we came back to Zaire. Then we went to Togo, then Benin, Togo, Libreville, and Kinshasa. Always in big halls or stadiums. Then we went to Central Africa with a private promoter. Then we stayed in Kinshasa in 1982. Then we went to Gabon. We went to Gabon so often.

- *Because there's money in Gabon?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Oh but there's money everywhere.

- *But Gabon has more, no, because of the oil, the people have more money?*



**Wuta Mayi** - You could say that. We went from Gabon to Cameroon.

In 1982 in the month of June I left OK jazz and came to Europe.

*- So you left Kinshasa twenty years ago?*

**Wuta Mayi** - You could say that. But I went back to Kinshasa in 1983 in January.

Then I returned to Europe in November of 1983. When I arrived in Europe in 1982

we formed the group Quatre Étoiles. I returned to Europe from Kinshasa in 1983

and we did our first recordings.

*- Where did you tour in Africa with QE?*

**Wuta Mayi** - In 1984 we did our first trip to Africa to the stadium Douala in

Cameroon and then we played in Yaounde.

*- How did the QE become so popular so quickly that you could play in a stadium in Cameroon?*

**Wuta Mayi** - The second track that we composed was called Enfant Bamileke.

Bamileke are people from Cameroon.

*- Did you record the song in Bamileke?*

**Wuta Mayi** - No. It was in Lingala and a little bit of French.

*- Did you do any songs with Franco in the languages of other African countries, or in Swahili?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Himself no but colleagues would do songs in Swahili.

*- Like what?*

**Wuta Mayi** - OO I can't remember. What's that song. He starts to sing

Nimasema

Ki Swahili. (repeat)

Franco himself couldn't speak Swahili.

*- Is there somebody in Kekele who speaks Swahili?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Ben Belinga. He comes from Bandundu. He speaks Swahili because he has spent a long time all over Zaire – in Lubumbashi, Kisangani.

*-Have you spent time in the East?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Only in passing.

*-When you've been in the East do you find people speak good Lingala?*

**Wuta Mayi** - They speak it, but not like us the people from the capital.

(Disappears to do sound check.)

*- In 1983 QE started. In 1983 you did your first concert in Africa, in Cameroon?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes but before that we did our first gigs in Europe here in Britain.

*- Yes I was there. I remember a gig in London. When you gained success as the QE when you weren't in Kinshasa, but in Europe, how did you manage to gain success in Africa?*

**Wuta Mayi** - For example to begin with there was a big promoter of African and Jamaican music who took us to Kenya called Victor Kibunza. He was based at that time in the US because he had a really big nightclub that promoted Jamaican and African music there. He came from Kenya. I don't know if he is still alive, I haven't heard of him for some time. The nightclub was called the Kilimanjaro in Washington.

*- Who was it in the club who knew him?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Nyboma, Syran. He was well known. They knew him because they often went over there often at his invitation. When we went to Kenya it was at his invitation. Victor stayed in Washington, but he still had business in Kenya. I played in Nairobi for the first time in 1988. That was our second trip to Africa. In Cameroon there was another promoter.

*- Do you normally prefer to play in Europe?*

**Wuta Mayi** - It's not that we prefer to play in Europe. We are musicians. If for instance you invite me to South Africa I would go. It depends on the conditions.

*- When you first played in Nairobi where was it?*

**Wuta Mayi** - It was in a stadium because it was for the independence day celebrations in 1988. We played in other stadiums that year in Kenya, Mombasa, Kisumu.

*- Where else did you play in Africa?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Burkina Faso. That was at the invitation of the government in 1990. We played in the capital in a stadium and in a province Bogado in a big hall, with a South African group the Mahotella Queens. In Europe we travelled all over Germany, Belgium, Canada, Holland, US, Bahamas, Colombia everywhere. We never played in Kinshasa. The people of Kinshasa know the QE a little from the

records but not a lot. Our records sold a lot in West Africa, East Africa, a lot Europe, USA, Canada voila.

*- Bumba Massa said that the reason Congolese music became so popular was because of the Greeks with their studios and manufacture.*

**Wuta Mayi** - But be careful you must remember that we also had a radio station with a very very powerful transmitter, so when you played music at that time nearly all Africa listened to that. Radio Congo Belge.

### **Kanda Bongo Man - Manchester 18/11/04**

Kanda Bongo Man, like Wuta Mayi, moved to Paris to further his career. He managed to establish a name for himself in his own right on the basis of the access to the music industry in Europe.

1955 Born in the town of Inongo, Bandundu, 500 kms north east of Kinshasa on the Kasai River. Cousin of Johnny Bokelo

1960s Influences: African Fiesta, Les Maquisards and Thu Zaina

1976 Joined Soki Dianzenza's Orchestre Bella Mambo (Bella Bella).  
Formed splinter group Bana Mambo with Diblo Dibala from Kisangani.

1979 Disastrous tour of Uganda at the end of Idi Amins' reign.  
Return to Kinshasa and joins Bella Bella under the Soki brothers.  
Kanda moved to Paris and started playing in the settled Congolese music scene.

Two years of anonymous nightclub gigging passed before the beginning of his European based career started to take off.

*- Could you check that the biography I have prepared on your life from various sources is correct?*

**Kanda** - Well the distance to my birthplace is further than 150 miles. I was born by the river on what was called at that time Lake Leopold II and is now called Mai

Ndombe in a place called Inongo. (*It's around 500 kms from Kinshasa in Bandundu.*) Kikongo is the main language of Bandundu but I don't speak it because we come from near to the province of Equateur and there on the border when they drew the border we ended up in Bandundu and we speak Lingala which is the language of Equateur. My parents are from the Bangala tribe, that is what people call us, because we speak Lingala. Why Lingala became so popular, if I believe the story they told us, is that the first soldiers, when the Belgians came, the first soldiers they took in the army were people from the Lingala side. Now when they took those soldiers to Kinshasa they used to go to market and so on and they could only speak Lingala. Later on because of this it became popular with everyone.

*- And when Mobutu came he carried on using Lingala as the language of the military?*

**Kanda** - He carried on using it because he is also Bangala because he is from Equateur.

*- So it was him who carried on with the same policy and turned it into the national language?*

**Kanda** - Exactly.

*- Why did all the musicians sing in Lingala?*

**Kanda** - In the capital Kinshasa everybody speaks Lingala first of all. That's because when the Belgians turned it into their capital the people from Equateur in the *Force Publique* came to Kinshasa.

*-But before the language around Kinshasa was Kikongo, so before Lingala was not the language of that region but of Equateur, but everybody started to speak it because of the Belgians influence through the importance of their Force Publique, is that what you mean?*

**Kanda** - Exactly.

*- So there's not many people that have sung in Kikongo as the main language for a modern band?*

**Kanda** - None. None that I can think of.

*- Have you ever sung in Swahili? Not even one song.*

**Kanda** - No. Now officially we have four national languages – Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba and Swahili – but the major language that everybody uses to communicate, talking, singing, is Lingala. Others just may be people from those areas get some hours for each language on the television and radio.



*- Are things changing under the Kabilas, because Laurent came from the East and was a Swahili speaker, and his soldiers from the East that came to Kinshasa spoke Swahili so Swahili has come to be heard on the streets in Kinshasa?*

**Kanda** - That's true but it won't last long because everybody in Kinshasa takes Lingala. They won't accept Swahili because they don't understand it.

*- So when you were in Kinshasa recently you didn't hear much Swahili?*

**Kanda** - I myself I can speak Swahili, I learnt it but the Swahili I speak is a Tanzanian and Kenyan Swahili. I have friends from there and I learnt it from them. That accent is another kind of accent from the one in Lubumbashi which I don't speak. I can understand it but I can't speak it because it's different. I can't really understand it so well because they have their own kind of way of saying things.

*- So really you haven't even made one song in Swahili like Brenda Fassie from South Africa did with her song Nakupenda?*

**Kanda** - But nobody would buy it if I sang in Swahili.

*- You mean in Kinshasa?*

**Kanda** - Even people from this Swahili region, they speak Swahili but when it comes to singing they will sing Lingala.

- *But if you want to sell more music in Tanzania or Kenya or Uganda isn't..*

**Kanda** - Lingala. It's better to sing in Lingala. They themselves they want Lingala.

- *But they don't understand Lingala!*

**Kanda** - It's still Lingala that they want. It's crazy!

- *But Super Mazembe, Samba Mapangala and other Congolese musicians they sing in Swahili.*

**Kanda** - They sing in Swahili because they live in Kenya to sell a bit there to pass on the message. Because they live. But when you go to Kenya the most popular Congolese songs are in Lingala. My best sellers there are in Lingala.

- *What like Sai Sai, Monie are all in Lingala and...*

**Kanda** ...they don't understand. But it's like if I buy a CD by Michael Jackson, I may not understand it but it's just the music.

- *Why do you think Lingala is so popular for music throughout Africa?*

**Kanda** - I've spoken with many people in Ivory Coast, Cameroon and so on and they say that for them Lingala is one of the most wonderful African languages. I ask them why? Most of them will say that when they listen to use speaking, just speaking it sounds like you are singing. I said 'How come?' Sometimes when we were speaking Lingala they just watch us. We say what are you watching us for? They say NO, don't worry, we are just listening how you are talking, are you singing or what. They like Lingala. Most of them like to learn some Lingala. We found some girls in the Ivory Coast in Abidjan. One of the girls we met had never been to the DRC but she could speak fluently. She's learnt it from the music with her friends! Everything perfect. Incredible. Lingala is not usually a very rich language. It's a very poor language. It's very easy to pronounce that's why people find it easy to learn. Swahili is so rich because in Swahili they have some Arabic inside, but Lingala is very simple inside.

*- If we carry on with the biography.*

**Kanda** - No my father wasn't a musician. Johnny Bokelo is not my uncle we are cousins. My grandfather wasn't a master musician either.

*- What were your most important influences apart from Les Maquisards musically?*

**Kanda** - Afrisa and Bella Bella. Then Tabu Ley. I was in Bella Mambo and Bella Bella – two different groups. When the two brothers in Bella Bella split from each other into Bella Mambo, Soki Vangu kept Bella Bella. The split was in 1972. They

rejoined together and then split again. His way of singing was something I loved. You see the song *Amour Perdu* on my new album is one of the last songs of Bella Bella. I joined Bella Bella in 1978. I was in Bella Mambo of Soki Dianzenza from 1973 to 1977. I was in many little groups in Kinshasa before I joined Bella Mambo. I was twelve years old when I moved to Kinshasa in 1967. My parents didn't move. They used to come to visit and sell some goods. All my brothers and sisters moved to Kinshasa. I stayed with my aunty.

- *Where did you start singing? In the church, the school...?*

**Kanda** - Just with friends because what I can say is that Kinshasa has been a special town for music for a long time. In each and every little area all over there are groups, even each street. I was in Bandalungua. We had our own group in Bandalungua called Tao Tao. We used to play in one bar an African bar called David's bar. That was my first show, I was so young, when I was about 15. Then I went to join another group. In 1972 when Bella Bella had a problem and Soki Dianzenza created Bella Mambo, he took the musicians from a group formed by two guitarists called Makosso that I had joined. I became the bandleader of that group.

- *So it wasn't in school or Church that you learnt but from the beginning in bands?*

**Kanda** - That's right. I was so young. In the street. I was a student at that time, so I was doing my school work as well. I joined Bella Mambo in 1972 and was the bandleader. Soki was the boss but I was taking the calls, doing the business,

organising rehearsals. I have all those old articles from that time, from that time about the music, in the magazine Bilenge. Most of them are in Paris but I have some here at home. I joined two other bands.

*- Did you listen to much radio at this time, was it important for your music?*

**Kanda** - Oh yes we listened only to radio Congo and radio Brazzaville, to both.

*- Was the reception good at that time, was Brazzaville clearer?*

**Kanda** - Oh yes it was clear. Brazzaville was clearer than ours because their transmitter was much more powerful than ours at that time. Our Congolese radio in Zaire could still be heard all over West Africa. People from Benin, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast they used to listen to our radio, it reach there. Radio Kinshasa used to reach all over including East Africa – it's closer anyway.

42:50

*- Have people from Nairobi told you that they listened to radio from Kinshasa at that time in the 1960s?*

**Kanda** - Oh yes. Congolese radio is the one that made our music has become so popular all over Africa. People used to listen Kinshasa radio more than records. When they heard it on the radio they wanted to buy it.

- *Do you think the radio is the most important thing then?*

**Kanda** - Oh Yes, Yes.

- *But you need the music to play.*

**Kanda** - Of course.

- *So it's lucky the music was so good! Could you hear radio from Nairobi or Lagos or anywhere else, was it only Congolese radio that you could hear?*

**Kanda** - Well the problem is one of language. They would speak in English or Swahili so then we would turn off.

- *Yes but when they were listening in Lingala it would be the same thing.*

**Kanda** - They would just listen to the music, not the news.

- *So was there a lot of music on the radio?*

**Kanda** - So much.

- *How much of the day was there music?*

**Kanda** - All the time. All the time, just a little break. Then more music. The news was there but not long. There was not much news then.

- *Was that Mobutu's policy do you think?*

**Kanda** - In a way. The Congolese people at that time was not so interested in news. The only people interested in news were the French intellectual types, the people weren't interested – they had no time for news. As long as they can get their food and beer after that it's music.

- *African Jazz did some political songs though. Were there any bands that did more political songs, like say Fela Kuti?*

**Kanda** - Not really. We don't have any artist who used to be very hard to the government because you know you would be killed. Mobutu would just kill you.

- *All of them – Kabasele, Franco, Rochereau –did they follow Mobutu?*

**Kanda** - Everyone. You have to if you want to eat. This is the problem with Mobutu.

- *Was authenticity important for you at that time in the 70s.*

**Kanda** - Authenticity you have to see the authenticity story from two different angles. One they lets go back like our ancestors used to live before. I think that's wrong. It's very wrong. But when you say let us try to pick up some of the things our ancestors used to do, some of their values, just some of them.

- *What about music, like the likembe?*

**Kanda** - Music is fine all those things but not to say let us wear animal skins and so on.

- *Like I don't understand there the abacost and then authenticity. The abacost is not authentic.*

**Kanda** - You see. That's why I'm saying there are the two different angles. The good authenticity for me was just to say OK. Let us sell our own music, authentic music. We can bring the electric guitar, the trumpet, the instruments from Europe but let us still sing in our own language, make our own music, our own melodies with those instruments. I think this is OK. But when you say don't bring any electric guitars in your music, don't bring acoustic drums, all the white instruments don't bring them you become crazy. Because the world is moving in front and you want to go back. What are you going to do? Nobody is going to buy your music.

- *Do you think you can be modern and authentic at the same time?*



**Kanda** - Yes because you have to choose what is good from Europe and then from your area and combine and then you can get something very very nice, like on this CD I have one song I have written, singing by three girls from Soweto, they are singing in English but with their Zulu accent, I love that feeling, Oh my God it is something else.

*- So you are mixing (Yes!) the feel of South Africa with the English language (Yes!) with the sound of the Congo. So what does it mean to be modern to you? Is that a modern thing to do?*

**Kanda** - Modern for me is that you have a technology in front of you, everyday something new in technology for music, in that way. OK I have to follow the new technology. The question I am asking myself is How am I going to combine that new instrument coming now into the music industry market, how am I going to put in my own authentic local music, so that when you come to listen to it you are going to think wow! This is something else. Like one day I was in Paris and one of my friends called me and he said you know what one day we are going to make music through the computer, I said are you crazy how could you make music with a computer are you crazy? I said we cannot do live gigs, only recording. He said no you can put it all in the computer through the keyboards and then go on stage. I said this is stupid, they are going to destroy the music like that. I was mad. Then I wanted to record one of my songs called *Muchana*, and I learnt how to use the computer. I said are you going to use a computer to him, and I said are you going to

spoil my music? I want people to play my music I don't want any machine music.

He put everything in the computer and it was my biggest seller. We just put on one guitar live and the vocals. Everything else was on the computer.

*- Personally I am not so keen on the sound of the computer for most instruments. I prefer to compose on the computer and then get people to play it. The little details of a drummers playing cannot be reproduced to my taste usually.*

**Kanda** - The music I can put on the computer is the rumba, the soft music without many changes, that's good but the *sebene* the solo must be live.

*- In 1979 I see you had a disastrous tour of Uganda. Was that your first time abroad? What happened?*

**Kanda** - That was terrible but my first time abroad was to Europe in 1978. I hadn't travelled much in Zaire. Only to Kisangani one time. I don't know the Congo well. I never got the chance to tour Congo. Bella Bella didn't tour we just played in Kinshasa. My story is so funny.

*- So how did you get the ticket to go to Europe?*

**Kanda** - My brother used to be a businessman and he got me the ticket. But the first time I went, I went with my manager of the time Mr Katalay Bukasa. I want him to be part of my story, he would be happy. I went in 1977 when he just decided to take

me because he liked the way I worked. I was so young. He wanted to make me happy. He was quite a rich man with other businesses. We went to Italy, Belgium and France. We stayed three months and then went back home. At that time there was nobody in Europe. I didn't meet any other musicians.

*- Not even in Paris? I thought some of Tabu Ley's musicians, or some of African Jazz had settled in Paris by that time. Manu Dibango.*

**Kanda** - Nobody. I'm talking about Congolese musicians. The Congolese musicians started coming to live in Europe I can say in 80s. I am one of that first wave. That is how I became so popular. I came first to live, to promote myself and now I can say I am the most popular Congolese musician in the world, because I travel a lot.

*- Somebody like Awilo Longomba is popular in Africa but he was never that popular in Zaire, the DRC. He established himself outside.*

**Kanda** - He's small, a young one. He started around 2000. He used to be with me, he's my boy, he learnt music from me. He used to come and visit my place in Kinshasa to watch how I was rehearsing and then I used to tell you have to learn how to play drums. Now he's doing OK as a singer.

*- I was thinking there is this route where you don't have to establish yourself in Kinshasa to become an international star, you can go via Paris, like Papa Wemba and yourself.*

*Then stars in Kinshasa, and Africa like Werra Son and J.B.Mpiana of Wenge Musica aren't so well known outside Africa.*

**Kanda** - There's something funny. Most of the people in Africa they know Wenge Musica. But when you tell them Werra Son they don't know him like the band Wenge Musica. The names of the bandleaders they don't know. Like they also know Zaiko Langa Langa, but they don't know Nyoko Longo. But people know Koffi Olomide because he put his name in front, and Papa Wemba.

*- But then Franco was able to do both, his name and TPOK Jazz. Who do you think the first big Congolese band to start touring Africa was, was it Franco, Tabu Ley?*

**Kanda** - It was both together.

*- So in 1978 you went back to Kinshasa after your first visit to Europe.*

**Kanda** - When I got back I wanted to return to Europe to stay as a musician but I couldn't come back because the government, the law, Mobutu's system was that when you take a passport it doesn't belong to you, it belongs to the government and when I returned they took it back. When you go to Belgium you are Congolese, you took a plane going from Kinshasa to Belgium. As soon as you come back to

Kinshasa airport the immigration people they took back your passport. It had to go back the passport immigration office. You have to apply and it's very hard. That time I came to Europe it was only people working for the government who got visas, a visa was a privilege. When you want to go to Europe they ask you 'what is your name? You are so young. What is the name of your father? Is your father working for the government?' So if you say Oh yes my name is Nguza and he is working for the government then OK, but when you say Kanda, they say 'Who is Kanda?'

*- So you have to have a father in the government or a sponsor like your manager?*

**Kanda** - Even he had trouble.

*- Could you pay to get one? You couldn't just buy one?*

**Kanda** - That time the system was not even to pay. The system was so hard.

*- But Franco could get visas know?*

**Kanda** - Of course he was big friend of Mobutu. That time I was very young.

*- I read it was Franco who was the head of the musicians union and he could decide in effect which musicians could travel.*

**Kanda** - Sometimes when you've got your visa and you've got on the plane ready to go. One of the security guards gets on the plane and starts looking at the faces. You are inside the plane, ready to take off to go to Europe; he comes in looking at people's faces. If he doesn't like your face he can say show me your passport, you show him your passport, your visa, your plane ticket including a paper from the immigration in Kinshasa with authorisation, imagine you've got a passport, a visa, your return ticket, you need another paper of Congolese immigration to allow you to get out of the country. A lot of people even after all that they just come and take them off the plane and they lose all their money for the ticket!

*- And all the time and hassle getting the visa and everything...*

**Kanda** - and he asks 'Why are you taking me off the plane?' And he says 'If you ask me another question I will put you in jail. You have nothing to say. When I came to Europe the first time I was lucky. When I came back and they took my passport back to the office I waited one year from 1977 to 1978 trying to get another passport. I'm telling you I used to walk nine miles to go to the passport office and I couldn't get that passport back. Now the problem is the passport office is in one place and you can't go straight into it, you must stay across the street, behind a barrier far from the office and you must wait for someone to come out of the office to come and get you, to come and talk to you there and take you back into the office.

*- So there's lots of people waiting there.*

**Kanda** - So many. So the way I got my passport back is a miracle. It's a miracle because my elder sister used to be married to the Congolese ambassador in Switzerland, Geneva. Then when Mobutu called him back to Kinshasa to give him a different position he became the boss of the immigration. You see. I was tired, losing weight, I'd been waiting so long. For one year I'd been walking nine miles everyday to the immigration office. Then my sister came one day she called and said you know what has happened, now they have divorced with two kids, one boy, one girl, and my sister said your brother-in-law is back, he's the boss of the immigration we should go down there to say Hi. I said my God, this is my chance. I remember we went in the morning, my sister and I. Finally we crossed that street where I had been waiting and we went straight up to the door of the immigration office. That was my first time to knock on that door. My first time to get in. We went straight away to the immigration boss's office. He said Hi to me how are you? I didn't want even to waste my time talking whatever. I said: 'Please. Can I get my passport?' He said: 'Your passport is here?' I said 'Yes'. He then called the same guy who made me suffer for a year. I didn't even apply. He said to this guy: 'Go and look under K, on the shelf, for Kanda and find this man's passport.' Two minutes later they had my passport, the Blue one, bring on the table. I was crying. He said: 'why are you crying?' and I told him the story. 'It's one year I've been standing waiting across the street there. I promised my sister I have nothing to give you now but I promise I will do something for you. I went with a small group to Uganda and the war came with Idi Amin just when we were there so we ran away. I'd flown to Kisangani. Then flew to Bunia and then by coach to Kampala. We didn't know anybody there but I'd

heard of Congolese musicians going there, people I'd met in Kinshasa, and I'd heard on the news that so and so group is in Kampala.

*- That's a long way to go and expensive. Did you think you could make money in Kampala?*

**Kanda** - This was the time I was waiting for my passport. I got my passport when I came back from Kampala. At the border with Uganda the immigration people just used a pass, they would give you that to cross the border. I had no passport. I had an identity card that was enough. Between Brazzaville and Kinshasa it's the same. I stayed there about six weeks and then the war came. There were plenty of Congolese there in Kampala, two or three bands playing the hotels you know. So then when I came back to Kinshasa and got my passport I was strait off to Europe to start my international career.

*- When you arrived in Paris in 1979 did you have any friends?*

**Kanda** - I knew nobody. I made some friends who helped me. I took any jobs – cleaning, I used to work in a glass factory. I just went to the job centre. Because when I came to Paris they gave me a visa to stay.

*- So there was no problem with immigration?*



**Kanda** - Not at that time because there was not many people. When you came at that time it was so easy. They needed people to work. The French government used to bring people from Mali, Senegal to work and from Congo there was not many people.

*- At that time why did you want to leave Congo?*

**Kanda** - Normally I didn't like Mobutu's regime. I used to hate the regime, not so much him but the regime. It was too hard. You see I told myself I will never go back home if Mobutu is still in power. I met some students and journalists organising against Mobutu including myself as a musician. I used to be very active.

*- Did you have friends who were imprisoned?*

**Kanda** - Even myself I was imprisoned because I insulted some soldiers because I was annoyed about my passport. They put me in jail for two days. I was so annoyed. They beat me up and put me in prison. I remember the name of one of the soldiers until today but I can't remember his face. I thought one day God will help me to find this soldier because he hit me badly, and I lost the sound in my ear for a week. I'd said to him 'What do you think, why do you refuse to give me my passport, this is a bullshit regime' so he hit me and imprisoned me. I was lucky because that prison is the prison from which people did not come out. I found out later when I told people where I'd been they said to me you are lucky to have come

out of that place. So when I came to Europe I went to the refugee council I gave my story after six months they let me stay.

- *Did you meet other Congolese people who were organising against Mobutu in Paris?*

**Kanda** - I found a friend who was a journalist from back home. He is the one who helped me to get out of jail. He was from *Elima*.<sup>489</sup> Now he is in Geneva. He's called Fior Muyinda, he used to be a very big journalist from *Elima*, working in the 70s. He was imprisoned in 1975. It was my brother who helped him get out of prison. They came to arrest him while he was interviewing me, in the middle of the interview about a Bella Mambo show coming up and a knock came on the door and they had come to pick him up. Why? Because he had gone to the immigration office and had asked for the form to get his passport. He applied. So they said you as a journalist why do you want to go outside? Do you want to go and talk rubbish about Mobutu? He was arrested because of that just because he applied to get a passport. They arrested him in *Elima's* office where we were doing the interview. When he got out of prison he managed to run away, to cross the river to Brazzaville and from there to go by road to Gabon and there he got little jobs and he managed to get a passport and from there he went to France. When I went to France I met him and said I'm in trouble here can you help me and he helped me to write my story for the refugee council. When Kabila came to power in 1997, because I am now so popular, they invited me to join the government as an advisor. They gave me a good position

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<sup>489</sup> *Elima* is a national Congolese daily newspaper.

in the Ministry of Culture, as advisor to the Minister. That was the second time. The first time they begged me to come back for a TV show but I said I would only travel on my French passport because I never want to use your fucking passport. So I'm still a French citizen. I was given two positions. One as the representative for culture abroad.

*- I saw that Tabu Ley and Tshala Muana also joined the government.*

**Kanda** - But not in a government position like mine because mine used to be like if the Minister wanted to travel it's not his job it's me. When I'm out of the country I'm representing the Ministry.

*- So could you give me an example of what you did in your official capacity?*

**Kanda** - I went to Canada representing the Ministry, to Toronto. I used to be the chairmen of SONECA, our musicians cooperative, in 1997. When you have that position in the ministry you become like a vice minister automatically and also at the same time you have to take care of SONECA. I used to have forty people working in SONECA when I was chairmen.

*- So you were responsible for collecting and distributing payments of duties to authors, representing author's rights?*

**Kanda** - Everything. I discussed that in Toronto. The vice chairman took care of payments. I didn't worry about money collecting. Me I was there to supervise to check things were going well.

*- So do you get any royalties from sales in Africa?*

**Kanda** - No because it's not well organised. In Congo and South Africa it's better organised than other countries by SONECA. I hear Tanzania is starting to get more organised.

*- What about from Kenya?*

**Kanda** - No royalties from Kenya even in the 80s – nothing.

*- So when did you do your first tour of Africa.*

**Kanda** - The first show was in 1986 in Mali, in Bamako, in a stadium. After that Ivory Coast. From 1981 to 1986, after my big break with Jambo Varenen of Island Records label Mango, who also introduced me to Peter Gabriel to perform at Womad in Reading, I toured in Europe – in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Britain. In 1989-90 I went to Canada and the US for the first time. I got a French manager and agent at that time, called Catherine Poesen, who heard about me and contacted me.

*- Did she organise the tours in Africa, did she have the contacts?*

**Kanda** - No people themselves in Africa they call us, a producer in Mali or Ivory Coast. Those people trust that we can do a good show. We don't know how they organise themselves to fill the stadium. We have a contract we give that to them, with the fee, transport the accommodation. If they sign and can pay then we go ahead.

*- So were the Malians paying for the flights and accommodation or did you organise the tours yourself?*

**Kanda** - No we cannot organise the tour by ourselves. They pay for everything, the flights to Mali and then Ivory Coast pays for the flights from Mali in 1986. After 1986 it was not every year in Africa. 1987 I returned to Europe. 1988 I went to perform in Dakar in the stadium with Youssou N'Dour for Nelson Mandela's birthday. That show was broadcast by satellite in France. In 1989 I went to Burkina Faso in the stadium there with 150,000 people. It was the government that invited me, Blaise Compaoré the president. This was two months after Thomas Sankara passed away (Oct. 1987), you know to keep the people quiet. In Senegal it was the government as well. The president sent his own private jet from Senegal to Paris to pick up me and my other friends. In 1989 I went to Guinea Conakry and performed in the stadium there. 1990 I performed in the stadium in Sierra Leone then in 1990 I went to the USA. Then I was in Gabon in a big hall with Manu Dibango in 1990. I never went to Cameroon. The first time I went to Kenya was in 1991 and Tanzania in 1992, which you can see on the video.

- *How about Zambia?*

**Kanda** - Oh yes Lusaka. That time it was when the government changed, when Chiluba came to power at the time of the elections. Catherine was a good agent. She did the contracts.

- *Did she understand the system in Africa?*

**Kanda** - The problem is not to understand the system in Africa. The thing is to be clear about the conditions.

- *But I've heard, like in Tanzania, where a local producer signs a contract like that and then can't deliver on the deal, like paying the hotel bills, and then the Congolese musicians can end up with problems. Like when I was in Kenya Defao was in prison.*

**Kanda** - I know. This depends on the managers office. They have to know how to deal with the promoters.

- *Have you ever had any problems like that?*

**Kanda** - No not really because always I'm asking for 50% up front.

*- Ah so then if there's a problem like paying the hotel bills you can pay, leave and then take it to the lawyers.*

**Kanda** - Exactly.

*- So can you tell me about this Kenyan story, where you have been linked romantically with the TV presenter Catherine Kasavuli, supposedly president Moi's mistress, and that being the reason for your expulsion in 1991? Where did that story come from?*

**Kanda** - From stupidity. The story comes from the street. You know when they kick someone out of the country you cannot give a good explanation.

*- But why did you not explain about this minister, Hezekiah Oyugi? You said in an interview with Amos Ngaira for the Nation, that he was behind your expulsion, because you couldn't perform at his daughter's wedding when he asked you to.*

**Kanda** - That minister used to work for the security. He was chairman of the security. The story is – I'm not completely sure of this story but this is what I have heard – I went to perform in Kenya in 1991. I'd just been in Australia touring and one promoter followed me from Kenya to Australia. Mr Tamakuti Ndongola. He came to Australia when I was in Perth performing. He is Congolese but he was living in Nairobi at that time. He phoned me in Paris. When he phoned I was outside with my suitcase going to the airport to go to Australia. So I said I cannot

talk now because I'm about to catch a plane. He said give me the Australian number and I will call you there. Then as soon as I arrived in Perth he phoned me and said I'm coming over. He flew to Perth to come and talk with me. He signed a contract with Catherine, my agent, in Perth for me to come to Kenya and do some shows. He went back to Nairobi with photos and everything. After Australia we passed by Johannesburg where we performed and then went to Kenya early in the morning. The airport was packed with fans.

*- So this is the time that is recorded on the video is it?*

**Kanda** - That's right. That was the first time I went there. The first show we did in the stadium was too packed. People were fighting to get in. The video is of the last of the performances in the stadium. There were bad stories in the town then.

*- Amos Ngaira told me this story about Catherine Kasavuli and you.*

**Kanda** - When I went to Kenya I didn't even know who Catherine was. I had never met her. I was in the Continental Hotel and my programme was very tight. Today you have an interview, tonight you perform. Then to Mombasa to perform. Then back to the stadium again and then away. Kenyan people went crazy. So the head of security guy, Oyugi, wanted me to perform at his daughter's wedding. I told him no I can't do that my programme is too tight but I will send Tshala Muana or Samba Mapangala on my behalf because I cannot make it. That's it. I think he was angry.



- *Why couldn't you explain this to the people at the time?*

**Kanda** - I heard this story not long ago. The police at the time came and took me out of the hotel and out of the country. The police said to me that the work permits had not been done properly. I think they just found an excuse but I didn't know for sure. They kicked me out. I was out for twelve years. I can go to South Africa using Kenyan airways. The plane can stop in Nairobi and I have to sleep in the airport in the VIP lounge with the police around me, while other transit passengers sleep in town.

- *I heard another story about the time you performed in Tanzania in Dar and you did a free show in front of the whole town in the main park in town there and that you did another show in a hotel where tickets cost \$100 a ticket.*

**Kanda** - This was a fundraising show for the poor kids to raise money for them. I didn't see that money it went straight to the organisers. It was only big people who came for that show.

- *But it's amazing that enough rich people bought tickets to fill the venue.*

**Kanda** - Last year I went back to Kenya for the first time since they kicked me out, after twelve years. Because one time I was coming from Zimbabwe I came to meet a connection in Nairobi and I met one Kenyan guy. That Kenyan guy used to be a journalist, now he has his own private media company. His family are living in

Washington DC and he was going back to his family. We met in the VIP lounge. He said on the way to airport I was playing your music in my car and now I've met you. He said where are you going. I said to New York and then to Canada. He said OK let fly together. His name is Raphael Tujo he went onto Washington. Two days later my phone rings and its Raphael saying you must come to my house before you go to Canada. He flies me to Washington picks me up at airport and puts me in a hotel, but says you come and eat at my house for the week. Raphael is just a fan! One day he says lets eat out. I say I like Chinese he says lets go. We're just sitting there the two of us. He says you know I'm going to take you back to Kenya. I say but how? Moi is still there. He says no maybe things will change. It turns out that he is a good friend of Catherine Kasavubi and that he knew it was just a funny story. The next day he bought my ticket to Canada and I went and thanked him very much. Then last year I was coming from South Africa, coming home and my phone rang and it was Raphael. I said where are you and he said I'm in Kenya you know now I'm the minister of tourism and information here in the new government. Moi is out. Now you must come. I told you in Washington that one day you would come back. Please come. You must come. I said I'm working in South Africa just now. He sent the tickets for me and my musicians and I went to Kenya. Raphael was waiting there at the airport with Catherine Kasavubi. The television cameras were there and he asked me, 'Do you know this woman?' I said 'No'. He said. 'You really don't know this woman?' I said 'No'. He said this is Catherine Kasavubi. Catherine talked on television saying this is my first time to see Kanda face to face. The news went out on the TV showing these things. Then last November I was in Kenya, in Carnivore,

in Bomax of Kenya and Safari Park Hotel for a VIP daytime family show fundraising. I went to Tanzania just for holidays after 1991.

*- So where else in Africa have you played?*

**Kanda** - Zambia, Senegal ...

*- Malawi?*

**Kanda** - Oh yes Malawi in the stadium. OhOoh. Malawi is the best I can say because I did three different stadiums in three days. Lilongwe on Friday, Saturday Blantyre, Sunday Muzu. I think it was the biggest show in the stadium in Malawi, not in numbers but in power.

*- It was sad when there pressure in the stadium in Tanzania was too great.*

**Kanda** - Yes I just stopped the show.

*-Mozambique?*

**Kanda** - I've been to Mozambique, I did a show there in the stadium in the mid 90s.

*- Uganda?*

**Kanda** - Oh yes Uganda yes, 1992 and 1994.

(Interview 2)

**Kanda** - I used to work for a record company called Melodie and Melodie used to work with Gallo. They used to licence Gallo's music for sale in Europe, their South African music. Then Melodie proposed to them. They said could you try and sell Kanda Bongo Man in South Africa, for distribution? They said no that music nobody knows it in South Africa it would be hard for us to sell Congolese music in South Africa. South Africa in the 80s – they didn't want it. They said it couldn't work in South Africa because it's not known. Melodie did my distribution in Europe, Rykodisc in Britain and America still today. Hannibal is a label of Rykodisc. It was run by Joe Boyd an American guy. In France I have no distribution because I'm staying with Gallo for three CD's. I've done two. Gallo told me they had arrangements with European record companies but Gallo's distribution in Europe is weak. I don't know any record company that can do that distribution. Melodie did the deal with Gallo that I now have because Melodie used to deal with them. In Kenya distribution is the worst. Kenya used to have a record company, Sony, that would distribute there, a small branch, but when it wasn't making a profit they stopped it. So there's no proper distribution there. Not really in Tanzania, Uganda and so on because there is too much piracy. In West Africa Mali and Ivory Coast are well organised for distribution.

- *What do you think about SAPE and sapeurs?*

**Kanda** - I couldn't watch that programme about silly boys stealing money to buy expensive clothes. If you want to watch a programme about music promoting something but when it's just about the clothes what's that? ? Music is not clothes. Anyone can go to buy clothes.

- *So you never did this thing with the Griffé, the designer labels?*

**Kanda** - No because when myself I'm going on stage I'm very clean, I look very clean and people like the way I look. It's not the clothes it's the way I wear them

- *like with your trademark hat.*

**Kanda** - *Exactly.* Because sometimes you can wear something expensive but it looks stupid. I remember one of the Congolese guys went to Tanzania to perform wearing something so tight, incredibly tight. People said 'What's this? We came with our children and wives and you are wearing this'. He said 'no but it's a *Griffé*'. They said we don't care about *Griffé* you must still dress well you can't come in front of people this.

You can wear something cheaper and if it suits your body it's fine.

- *What about all these dances how important are they to the music?*

**Kanda** - People don't like to use the same kind of dance every year. They don't like boring things so there are always new things come along.

- *So when you are doing a show in Africa do you do a different show from one in Europe putting in the latest Congolese dance, like kiWanzenza?*

**Kanda** - We combine all the dances. They like to see the new ones but they like to see the old ones too like *kwassa kwassa*. Even in one song I can combine a new dance like *tshaku libondas* with *kwassa kwassa*.

- *When did television start in Zaire? Did you watch much? Was there much music on the TV? Did you watch?*

**Kanda** - I used to watch it. There was a lot of Congolese music. I went on TV with Bella Bella.

## **Kassongo wa Kanema – Nairobi 20/03/02**

Kassongo has been a central figure to the expatriate Congolese music scene in Nairobi since the 1970s when the band he came to lead, Super Mazembe, was a huge success there.

**Kassongo** – I did Swahili at school (in Lubumbashi) and there is always a debate about which is the correct Swahili. Often our Swahili wins those debates about who is using the correct Swahili, or who has the correct word. We learnt it properly. Congo is a very big country. Our Swahili is different from that in Likasi and totally different from that in Bukavu. When you go towards Kalami then the Tanzanian influence comes. In Kisangani it's very different. If I heard a Congolese speaking Swahili I could tell immediately where they were from.

*- In South Africa they use an abusive term for foreigners – amakwerakwera – especially for West Africans. Is there any equivalent here that you've experienced?*

**Kassongo** – It's funny it's not like that here. Congolese people are not engaged in crime here it's more the musicians going for women that causes a problem. It's not really a big thing. Women like following foreigners and in this respect they like Congolese. We are a peaceful people we don't engage in crime so to some extent we are not called names. I will give you an example of how we get along.

Mazembe were invited to perform in Eldoret at a *harambee* fundraiser around 1976.

Our vice president at the time Moi was the guest of honour. It was a *harambee* dance. He danced throughout the whole first half until the *harambee* started. He even gave our bandleader, Longwa a badge, a scout's badge. He knew Longwa through the scout movement. Moi became president when Kenyatta died in 1978. He became born again after he became president around 1979 and he drastically changed to Gospel music for government functions for entertainment and *harambee* he began inviting Gospel groups to perform. Gospel is performed in all the Kenyan languages and now people have started to perform Gospel in Lingala. For instance this man waiting here wants to record a sermon in Lingala in my studio. We have the band Makoma who do Gospel Lingala which is very popular. We sang in Swahili in Lubumbashi. But for the market here we sing Swahili and Lingala. But when we came here first we had many Lingala songs – so we had to record those first.<sup>490</sup> Then we started doing some Swahili stuff here. Like that *Shauri Yako* song...

We have no Kenyan Benga influence.<sup>491</sup> Our music is typically Congolese it has nothing to do with Benga. You know there is a confusion. When Sam Mangwana went to West Africa, to Cote d'Ivoire, he found the kind of music that was selling there. So he decided to start up a band with a different taste – which was more like...

- *He mixed it with some Cote d'Ivoire music?*

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<sup>490</sup> It is interesting that Super Mazembe arrived in Nairobi with a Lingala repertoire in 1974 even though Kassongo says here that they sang in Swahili in Lubumbashi. It appears that like many bands in Eastern Congo in the years following independence there was a move away from Swahili to Lingala.

<sup>491</sup> Benga is the term for the Kenyan urban pop music of this period.



**Kassongo** - Yes and apparently the Cote d'Ivoire music sounds a bit like Benga. So that's why people think that we took the Benga style – no never...

The bass guitar sound we have now in Mazembe and in Congo it's more traditional.

*- Even that fast bubbly bass style you play?*

**Kassongo** - Yes its too traditional. It's traditional.

*- But I don't here it in Franco or Tabu Ley's music? Franco's bass players are more slow. ('yes more slow') So where does this bass style come from?*

**Kassongo** - The bass we play – even in Super Mazembe – it's too much traditional.

It's like the big drums. That's why it goes like Dum Dum Dum.

Like OK I can talk on behalf of Atia our bassist. We have the influence of M' Puita.

M'Puita is an instrument. It plays bass. It's not a drum. You play like this. It's made of a cow skin. There's a stick inside when you're pulling that stick you get the sound. It's the music of Kasai.

*- Have you ever had problems with work permits and immigration in Kenya? When Vundumuna went to Japan was that because of immigration problems?*

**Kassongo** - They just got a contract with the same company I work with. It was just a coincidence that when they were arranging the trip to Japan the immigration issue was also there.

- *So you've never had any problems from Kenyan people or the Kenyan government?*

**Kassongo** - No not at all.

(In the 1980s Swahili Gospel with Moi's sponsorship, radio airtime and a television programme *Sing and Shine* dedicated to the genre established itself as a popular and properly national genre.<sup>492</sup> We went on to discuss how changing technologies and the arrival and subsequent disappearance of local and international record companies have affected the fortunes of Super Mazembe like other Congolese bands based in Kenya.)

**Kassongo** - In the seventies we used to sell a lot of records. I recorded a first gold disc Viva Christmas with Baba Gaston who brought a lot of musicians into Kenya. He invited me. I was playing with Maquis du Zaire in Dar es Salaam and he called me to come to Nairobi to come and work with him in Baba National. So when I came in 1976 we recorded it and after two months it was a gold. So we could say we put one record in the market and live off that royalty. We didn't need to perform. We used to get enough. Now this thing changed in 1982. Before that there were a lot of those gramophones, the small ones, which were cheaper – everybody could

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<sup>492</sup> For the story of the rise of Kenyan Swahili Gospel see Kidula (2000).

afford to buy them. It was going for between 400 and 800 shillings. But the Philips factory closed down in Nairobi in 1982 and nobody could get those players anymore. So the record sales dropped drastically.

- *What about cassettes, when did they come in?*

**Kassongo** - About the same time - even before.

- *And did the piracy start at that time?*

**Kassongo** - The pirates started up around 1982. So the market was taken by the locals. After some time they could not get materials so the factory was totally closed by 1986.

- *So between 1982 and 1986 production was very poor?*

**Kassongo** - Yes very poor production.

- *What about the recording industry? Like you said you left Lubumbashi because of the poor recording facilities? In 1978 where were you recording?*

**Kassongo** - We used to record at SUPRA. At PolyGram. With Andrew Crawford, and at High Fidelity studios. Those were the four most popular studios.

- *Were those studios linked to record companies?*

**Kassongo** - Only PolyGram.

- *Was there any other record company selling records in Kenya apart from PolyGram?*

**Kassongo** - Yes AIT was selling and AI records the Andrews Company. That's a *muzungu* Kenyan company run by Mike Andrews.<sup>493</sup> He still has the shop down at Lovington Green. You'll see AI records right up where you pass the Methodist Church. We were recording with him. Before we had a contract with EMI records. Then EMI closed the company in Kenya in 1978 and we moved to AI. We recorded Viva Christmas with Polydor. Polydor closed their operations around 1986 then. So I've recorded with all those companies. AI are still selling and distributing Congolese music or foreign music, getting the distribution rights.

- *If you record yourself do you take your music to his company?*

**Kassongo** - No I don't do that any more. I do the production and distribution myself going to the record stores, leaving records and returning to collect the money.

- *And what about getting on play lists at the radio?*

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<sup>493</sup> This company is still functioning at the time of writing. Website: <http://www.airecords-africa.com/docs/about.htm>

**Kassongo** - I do the same I give the CD to the radio library and they play it.

We went on to discuss the question of ethnicity. Kassongo discussed how they use Luo or Kikuyu when he takes a small band to perform in Japan but how it would not be appreciated in Kenya. I mention a Luo song, *Malo Malo*, by a Congolese band Bilenge Musica that was very popular at the time.

- *But here if you sing a Luo song they don't like it?*

**Kassongo** - No, no because maybe it's because of the tribe I'm not very sure I don't know... All I can say is that its not really appreciated.

- *Well I know that Bilenge do this one song where called Malo Malo and that's Luo. And they say it's very popular?*

**Kassongo** - Yes very popular. *Malo Malo* everybody likes it. Not just the Luo.

- *But you said it wouldn't be appreciated?*

**Kassongo** - But that's only one song. Only one song. There's another one it's given a lot of airtime by another Luo group. Everybody likes it. Because these are young people they put the English and then put the Luo inside. It's a nice song.

- *Do you find the Luo people like Congolese music more than other groups?*

**Kassongo** – Yes that's true. The Luo and the Luhya and the people from the coast, Swahili speakers like Lingala music because they don't have the tribe barrier. They just like the music. They don't have this thing of this is from this tribe and this from that tribe.

- *The Kikuyu seem to be more resistant to Lingala music.*

**Kassongo** – Yes. If you go to Nyeri in the Gikuyu lands people will still come though but don't stay or you will not have an audience.

- *What about the other groups like the Akamba, the Bajuni, and Gorana..?*

**Kassongo** – The Kipsigis people like the music but the Maasai not so much. The Bajuni and Gorana coming from the coast prefer *taarab* music. Swahili speakers like the Mijikendas they like it. They are good dancers. One of the dancers with Rumba Japan is Mijikenda and all the dance troupe with Mangelepa. Most good dancers are Mijikendas. I don't know why they are such good dancers. People like the Turkana are too remote. With the Kamba it's a personal thing, some do some don't. It's an individual feeling.

(Kassongo went on to describe how the Benga Luo music of D.O.Misiani was popular in Eastern Congo in the 1970s with people there connected linguistically to

the Luo. Kassongo saw the power of Congolese music and its capacity of self-reinvention as springing from traditional music and the way somebody like Franco adapted the sound of the likembe and Kikongo music. Paradoxically he also sees its strength as lying in how little ethnicity has mattered for distinguishing musical identity compared with the situation in Kenya.)

*- You were saying you can hear the roots of Congolese music in tradition, like Kikongo sounds in Franco's music or music from Kasai in Atia you bassists playing but with Mpiana and Werra Son I can't hear that sort of difference.*

**Kassongo** – There's no difference. Because with these young people if you talk to J.B. Mpiana he can't really speak Tshiluba. He's from the tribe but he can't speak it, he just speaks Lingala and French. Nobody would ask him what tribe he's from it's impossible. It doesn't happen in our country. People don't ask that. The tribe is not a priority.

*-Is that Mobutu who made that happen? He didn't have a language policy to the extent of Nyerere with Swahili.*

**Kassongo** – OK let me say it was political. He wanted to connect all the people to himself to keep him going. He was pushing Lingala because he was a soldier with the army and the police but not in school. If anything Lingala has a lot of words that are borrowed from other languages. It doesn't have such a rich vocabulary but it's good for singing for melody then it's very rich.

After this discussion about Congolese roots we went on to discuss the new Swahili Rap in Kenya and whether it bears any comparison in its use of influences from across the Atlantic with the Congolese and Tanzanian re-appropriation of Latin Music in the 1950s. The relative lack of interest in Latin Music in Kenya in the 1950s was also remarked upon.

*- What do you think about the influence of American rap and hip-hop music now in Kenya?*

**Kassongo** – Let me say that Rn'B and Hip Hop are very popular in Kenya especially with the young people.

*- Do you see this as a neo-colonial thing in any way – that it's African American but still American?*

**Kassongo** – I don't think it's a good idea because it's foreign. It's still foreign even though it is from African Americans. When I go to Japan I live with the African Americans. If anything to be frank they don't like us. You could cooperate nicely with a white American but not the black Americans. I don't know why. African Americans take us like their enemies. They are pretending. A black American would never like a black African. I had one time I went to Japan with a CD of a young band here. A friend, a bass player, an Italian American really liked it. Another American a black American came and said who is that. When we told him



it was a Kenyan band he said that music belongs to the ghetto and that no band could ever do it the way they do it, especially when it comes to African bands.

*- Do you see it connected with imperialism in any way? I mean how does the return of Cuban music to Africa in Congolese rumba differ from the return of Rn'B and Hip Hop?*

**Kassongo** – My opinion is that this Hip Hop music is typically American and there is nothing African about the music. The music from Cuba is played by people originally from Africa.

*-But so is the African American music isn't it.*

**Kassongo** – No the African taste of music can be heard in the older music of James Brown and Otis Redding. You can hear it in the music of South Africa. There are many similarities. But not the Hip Hop. The Rn'B is maybe a bit Africanish.

*- It seems to me that what Franco did with Cuban music was something very Congolese. Cuban music is very different now from what came out of TPOK jazz. When people take Hip Hop and Rn'B here they don't change it that much, just in the language, not in the bass or guitars or drums.*

**Kassongo** – I think that is a waste of time. I wouldn't ever encourage a young upcoming musician to do it. To whom will you sell that music? They can't call it African music just because an African sings it.

*-This relationship to the diaspora is interesting. When you hear African reggae you think oh yes Jamaica. But when you hear Congolese rumba you don't think oh yes Cuba or Latin America you just think Congo.*

**Kassongo** – They don't think Cuba because it has changed over the years. It now has an identity of its own which is Congo. You really have to know the history to hear the Cuban connection.

*- It strikes me that the popularity of Congolese music in Africa mirrors that of Latin music.*

**Kassongo** – Sure. That influence is not in Kenya. Kenyans knew the Congolese rumba but they weren't buying Cuban music. I heard that music in Tanzania. When I arrived they were actually pressing the Cuban records here in Nairobi and selling them in Tanzania where they were popular but not here. PolyGram were pressing Cuban records here. In Zambia there was the Teal Company that was releasing Cuban records and I heard them there.

Finally we discussed where Kassongo has travelled and how he has adapted his music to the demands of the markets in which he finds himself, using the range of

musical styles he has picked up. It is paradoxical that it is only abroad in the Far East that Kassongo uses the ethnically specific music of Kenya for the international marketing.

- *Where have you played in Africa?*

**Kassongo** – Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe we backed Tshala Muana with my group in 1991. I've been to Madagascar with Mazembe, Ethiopia with Virunga, Uganda with Mazembe, Comores with Mazembe, Mauritius with Maquis du Zaire. When we arrived there we weren't known so we played covers of Latin Music especially songs by Johnny Pacheco. In Ethiopia the music was popular because of the dancing but we would play international pop like *Eye of the Tiger* and music by the Commodores. We played many things. We played rumba for the African community in Ethiopia from other countries but not for the Ethiopians, they wanted western music but with Congolese dancing. Samba didn't know those songs but myself and Coco Zigo and the other singers we learnt those songs like Lucy by the Commodores, *Let It Be*, *O Bla Di*, by the Beatles. When we were doing those songs Samba just sat down. I've been all over Japan. I've played in Hong Kong and Vietnam with the Ivory Band. When I go to Japan I go with the Ivory Band. India, Pakistan, Dubai, Sri Lanka, in Korea. In that band we are five. Four Kenyans and one Tanzanian. We played at a festival in Sri Lanka. We play Congolese music, some Benga, Luo songs, Luhya songs but we don't play electric instruments we play percussion and acoustic. Drum, bass, electric guitar, keyboard and me playing percussion and we all sing. In Dubai we were nine because the club demanded nine.

In Ethiopia we went with the full band including the horn section. We went to Bujumbura, Kigali and Kampala with Virunga and to Tanzania with Mazembe. When I was in Tanzania I was with Maquis du Zaire.

## **Malcot Liwoso.**

Malcot Liwoso is the only Congolese musician with a functioning band with a CD in Johannesburg at the time of writing. He grew up with the music of the third generation in the 1980s. Interviewed in Johannesburg 20/03/04

**Liwoso** – The problem for the big stars coming here is that there are not the producers capable of organising the shows who have the interest in Congolese music. There are plenty of halls and stadiums. If there was a good enough producer it would work. I haven't found one myself. I think there aren't any. I have done a double album myself *System Ya Sorry*. A double album can last two years. Eight or nine tracks per album.

*- How have you found the other African musicians here?*

**Liwoso** - There are good ones here. But they do their sort of music and we do another form. I have tried to mix the styles to an extent. You can see here on the cover I have mixed the Congolese flag with the South African flag with my face in the middle. That signifies the mix of Congolese and South African culture. I want to appeal to the South African market.

*- Are there any South African musicians that are trying to use the Congolese sound?*

**Liwoso** – There are plenty. When they use it they don't really know how to use it. They might use a Congolese guitarist or bassist. For instance Arthur with his song

*kwassa kwassa*, there is Makeba who has done an album with some influence, Loko Kanza has done some and Brenda Fassie has done a song with Papa Wemba. They like the Congolese sound but they don't want it too high, they leave it far back, in the background.

*Why?*

**Liwoso** – Because they don't want the Congolese music to diminish their music.

They are scared. If you like at all over Africa, countries like Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and it's automatically rumba. Indisputably it's the rumba. Ivory Coast everywhere. They don't want to give way to rumba. But it will arrive.

*Why do you think it is like that, that rumba is popular all over Africa but not in South Africa?*

**Liwoso** – It's good music.

*Is it the dance?*

**Liwoso** – It's not so much the dance. It's the music that makes people dance. It's well made, well arranged. It's a gift of art. It's not fashion. Sure being Congolese means to be well dressed, elegant, intelligent to produce with quality, sweetness, to be 'good looking' - that's the *salsa Congolaise*.

- *Do you think there is any other African country that brings together all these qualities?*

**Liwoso** – I am Congolese so I do not know so much about the others.

- *Well what about the South Africans?*

**Liwoso** – In South Africa fashion reaches nowhere. They are Anglophone, Anglophone's clothing is nothing, you can see that. Us Francophones we know how to dress, we love fashion. The Anglophones love money, nice cars, houses, put it in the bank not so much in clothes we like to dress well.

- *Right I will ask this South African bar woman if you are right. Are Congolese better dressed than South Africans?*

**Bar Woman** – No. We mix colours more, pink and red and yellow. My hair style is good it's South African.

**Liwoso** – But say if you take the English and Italians. The British don't know how to dress. You can't compare them to the Italians.

- *Fashion and style are important in for Congolese musicians like the SAPE of Papa Wemba, the way you walk, the way you arrive (débarqué). Did you grow up in Kinshasa?*

**Liwoso** – Yes I grew up in Matonge. My parents are from Yollo another part of Kinshasa. I left because of the war. I grew up as a child listening to the radio I liked Tabu Ley the way he sang, and the way he composed. When I grew up I liked Zaiko. There is too much noise in the music of Wenge I have not interest in the Mpiana, Werra Son battle. Papa Wemba is a good singer but I don't like his music so much. I like Sam Mangwana, Carlito, King Kester and Koffi Olomide because he is in the school of Tabu Ley. I followed the school of Familia Dei, because I like the musicians. After Familia Dei it was *Basilique Loningisa*, which means something that makes you move a lot. That was in 1992. I did some work as a backing singer with them. When I started in music I followed that music because it was the same school as Carlito, Sam Mangwana and Koffi. Tabu Ley came from the school of Kalle Jeef and African Jazz, which became African Fiesta and Afrisa. All the great singers come from this school. That's the melancholic songs with great voices. The other school is OK Jazz. Now people shout so much, I like to sing. Tabu Ley doesn't shout like that. Songs like (sings one). You see there's no shouting, there's melody. I've always been a singer. I learnt in the Catholic Church in the choir. In those days my parents didn't like me to go into popular music because they thought it was the music of *voyous* but they understood that I loved music too much eventually.



*- I don't think there are any other Congolese musicians here that have made an album here, so that takes courage.*

**Liwoso** – There are plenty of Congolese musicians playing in bars and getting by but they won't take the risk with their money. They think it won't work here. They want to get to France. But I thought no I am here, I must try. Everything is possible for somebody who tries. So I made a CD. That provides an example to others. They can see that I get on TV with that, on SABC1 and SABC2. It was the people who run the music programmes who invited us from *Ezodumo*. We have been on Channel Africa as well there is somebody who has helped me a lot there who is Ivorian.

*- Have you tried to learn the languages here?*

**Liwoso** – I have tried but I have not got that far. Zulu a bit but it's difficult I have been getting on with English. After Basilique Loningisa I played with a group called Super Wawa, we released an album with a song about Aids that I composed. It wasn't recorded in the way that I wanted, it wasn't sung in the way I wanted. So I thought I had to do it myself. If you don't start today you never will. There are people who helped me to become a singer in Kinshasa, some great singers and I had my own band called Generation Plus. We recorded an album in studio Bogongo with some great musicians many who are now in France in 1996. When I left Kinshasa in 1996 I headed for Goma with one of my brothers by plane. I had brother in the army there. I left because there were no good producers in Kinshasa and it's

full of pirates so it's very difficult to make money. I thought that Nairobi would have better producers. So I went from Goma to Uganda and then to Nairobi because I heard it was better to make a CD there and then take it back to Kinshasa. There are the studios in Kinshasa but not the CD production facilities like they have in Nairobi, no the factories. Even if you find one they will charge a lot and then take a copy and make pirate copies. Koffi and Pépé Kallé do the same thing. My brother, in the army, gave me a little money to record in Kinshasa, then I took the master to Nairobi. When I arrived in 1996 the war started soon after in early 1997 and I couldn't go back. I was also charged with getting royalties for Congolese musicians by SONECA, the government and Verckys who was president of the musicians union in Kinshasa (UMUZA later UMUCA). Ingbanda, the president of SONECA under Mobutu took all the musicians money, a Mobutist who was in bed with the government minister for culture Ngongzola Fostin. I was working for UMUZA because SONECA was not collecting the money for the musicians, so UMUZA wanted to get the money directly. The first minister Kendo wa Dondo authorised us to do that because he knew what was going on with the Mobutist taking all the money. Even Mobutu authorised us because he could say one thing to one person and another to somebody else even though he would let SONECA take all the money. So it would seem like he was on everybody's side. He would use UMUZA and SONECA against each other, that was his politics. My mission was not successful because of the war because all my letters of authority ceased to function once the government fell and I returned to Goma to my brother when the war arrived in Goma. I ended up fleeing from Goma to Kisangani through the forest. I walked 1000km for three months. I had no choice. I had to flee in front of the rebels and the

Rwandans otherwise I would be dead. I didn't want to join the Rwandans. The Rwandans have been harmful towards us for a long time. With the Angolans and Tanzanians we have not had a problem, but the Rwandans want to deal with us using force. They want our land. In 1997 I made it to Kisangani. We ate anything we could find in the forest, fruits, roots we had no choice. People helped us. In Kisangani I came back to a normal life with a musician I knew there who had a big band. I sang for a while for enough to eat. From there I made it to Lubumbashi and crossed over to Zambia without a passport using an unofficial crossing. After 3 months in the forest I was used to it. There were many Congolese crossing the border. I got to Lusaka but the Congolese were just playing in bars not making much money, playing white music, covers. Here there are bars like that where musicians play for next to nothing all night. I don't want to do that. It's not for dancing it's just background music in the restaurant. That's no good, it's not like the clubs in Kinshasa. How can you pay your bills for the hospital, for food, for clothes with the money they pay? That discourages you. There could be ten of you and you get nothing. So great Congolese musicians that I know here become security guards.

*- Have you ever been attacked here?*

**Liwoso** – Yes three times with guns and knives.

*- Did they know you were not from here?*

**Liwoso** – They can tell from my morphology. When they see that they don't make a mistake. They were from here. They have so many techniques. One grabs your arm while another holds a knife to you and then they take what they want. Now I must go and go and do a rehearsal with the South African dancers who are learning from the Congolese.

*- What do you think of the American influence here?*

**Liwoso** – I don't think the South Africans are sure of what they want to be or who they are or what to be proud of. They have known great music, Miriam Makeba, Ladysmith Black Mambazo but now they try to be like Americans as if they think Americans are better than them. How can they think that. Jazz and Blues started in Africa with the slaves, singing the songs of suffering in the fields that's how it started. So Africans should see that what they do is good, but they turn to America. They don't hear the music of Zambia, of Congo, of Morocco, Senegalese but American. So that is a very dangerous complex. What they did with people like Makeba is great, I love it, it's a great music that is loved all over the world. So how can they make this American music. You see American music on the TV here all the time, 24 hours a day. It's a nightmare. Never do you see a single clip of Congolese or Senegalese music on the TV here.

*- But then Latin and Cuban music was a big influence in the birth of Congolese popular music no?*

**Liwoso** – The way Cuban music was and is an influence in Kinshasa is not the same as the influence of American music here. If you listen to the radio in Kinshasa it is not Cuban music. Congolese musicians made use of some Cuban music to create Congolese Rumba but we changed it and made it our own. We mixed it with traditional Congolese music all of our rhythms and sounds.

**Liwoso** – You need money to promote music.

*- How did you find the South African dancers to work with you?*

**Liwoso** – I went to Mega Music to meet a white friend there. When we started talking I saw some women practising dances. I was interested and I went to watch them. I chose four and asked them if they'd work with me and learn the Congolese dances.

*- Were they interested then?*

**Liwoso** – They'd heard the music but didn't know how to do the dances. They were interested. To begin with they were disorganised and did it in their own way. Now they have got the moves but they need to learn the expressions on their faces.

*- Are there not Congolese women who would like to do that here?*

**Liwoso** – There are Congolese women here but when the Congolese come here they are too proud. They may not take dancing seriously. They will come one day and then the next they will say that their husbands won't let them, my family are complaining. But you see the same women in *Sankayi* looking for men or in the Hotel Continental. But dancing is hard work. The Congolese often think a dancer is going to be a prostitute. The South African women know what I am trying to do. When they dance they dance without complaining. They know it is work. The Congolese think because the dances are sexy that it has something to do with prostitution. You see white dancers in Europe dancing in bikinis without it meaning they are prostitutes or can't marry. It's a job. You dance put your clothes back on go home. But for the Congolese it's a problem. In Kinshasa they understand because they can see the female dancers can make money like for Koffi. You have to respect it as a gift.

- *What does authenticité mean for you in music now, do people ever talk about it now?*

**Liwoso** – What do you mean? Oh you mean from Mobutu *Recours à l'authenticité*. The word is not used much now since Mobutu's death. But when you use the word for its profound normal meaning you can say it's still there in Congolese music. When you listen to the music of many countries it reflects the influence of colonisers. Like the music of Mozambique or Angola you can hear Portugal. When you listen to South African music you can hear the influence of the English and now

the Americans. You often hear the influence of the colonisers but when you listen to Congolese music you don't hear the influence of the colonisers.

**Lowiso** – When we play rumba, like Sukisa National, you can hear the music of the Kikongo people in the rhythm. That is what makes it authentic, it has always remained authentic. It is a new music that nobody knew before, like the music of Nana Maskouri. It is a new music that comes from *noel*. It is a country at war but the music survives and keeps its hold on the people. War has killed the economy, the politics even the morality of the people but the music has not been killed. Even football has been killed. Everybody hunts diamonds for themselves but music is for everybody. When people mention the names of Koffi Olomide people know he is Congolese, or Papa Wemba. Everything else is destroyed. Music now maintains our pride. Before there was plenty we are reduced to the music because everything else is destroyed. We can't win at football. Music is the only thing we have left to be proud of. We can defend our colours with our music.

- *Why do you think South Africa is the only country where the Congolese music hasn't triumphed?*

**Lowiso** – People talk like that saying rumba doesn't work here, there may be good studios but people won't accept rumba here. Go to Gabon, or Cameroon or Guinea it's great there, they accept rumba easily or Ivory Coast or Kenya or Paris then it will

work. But I don't think like that. I think I can make it work here. The Zambians love to buy Congolese music and to dance to it but they will hardly pay you anything in the clubs and you can't record there you can't make a career there. The thing to do is a big show for 2 or 3 days, like Koffi and then go. If you live there they become tired of you. You have to do other things to survive if you live in Zambia than music.

*- What does it mean to you to be modern. Can you be authentic and modern, African and modern at the same time?*

**Lowiso** – I don't know exactly what modernisation means. Being modern is not the same as being European or American. Modernisation is a way of living, of actualising yourself. If you take the France of Bonaparte and the France of Chirac they are not the same thing, or the United States of George Washington and today they are not the same they are modernised. Everybody has their own way of realising themselves. Take somebody with a small house today they gradually make a bigger house. Or somebody with bare feet. He says I keep getting sharp stones in my feet so he starts thinking I need to cover my feet or to stop his body burning. Eventually after many years shoes are invented. Then he starts thinking it's so hard walking so far and eventually invents a bicycle. From that he eventually invents a car.

*- What about in music?*



**Lowiso** – It's about working out what people are wanting and developing your music as well as incorporating and using the latest technology.

*- It's the technology?*

**Lowiso** – It's not only the technology it's about moving the music forward. But the technology is very important. Imagine a studio without technology. What could you do? Look what's developed with computers. Modernisation doesn't mean having to dress like Occidentals, to talk like them or play music like them because we have our own clothes and music. When you go to Jamaica the government protects and encouraged its music. If Congo was properly organised then the government would support the music with a legal framework that insured the payment of royalties, protected copyright and allowed for musicians to travel with a passport that was respected but we have none of that. Anyone can take our music and use it because it is not protected. Producers work without contracts. There are no proper music schools. Congolese musicians just learn it from cassettes, tapes without written music. Now people just chase diamonds but our music is a huge gift. Now Congolese have had to go abroad so they can make money where their royalties are protected like in France with SABEM. What is SONECA doing? Nothing. When you say you are from Congo everybody thinks 'ah that is a country without a government without order'. If we had a president who really loved the country we could be a really great country and our music would be an important part of that. We don't need to learn music we have it in the blood. It's like in Soweto they can just sing it's in the blood even to learn to dance it takes one day.

It is possible to modernise without authenticity. It is not a *return* to authenticity but *recourse* to authenticity, which means you turn to the best things in our heritage.

Like it is very important to show respect in Africa towards elders, to value them and obey them and address them properly. You can modernise without copying others.

Look at the rumba of Oliviera, Wendo, Kalle Jeef. It has changed now but it is still our music a modernised authenticity, that is a recourse. We have modernised our authenticity without copying others, without copying the French or the Belgians.

They haven't really got a music but the French have at least.

- *What do you think now? Do you think there can be a fifth generation?*

**Lowiso** – That is the future and I can't know. Like there has been these four generations there must be a fifth. Everybody must do what they have to do and we will see. Only God knows when.

- *How did you meet the people from SABC.*

**Lowiso** – Somebody gave me a number. I phoned I sent them my CD. I chatted with them and we made an agreement. But they don't pay much. Sunday at six thirty *Ezodumo*. We don't know when it will be broadcast. It's only for African music. It's the first time they will have had a Congolese band they told me. They play American music all the time rather than African music and they have to pay royalties to America. Why don't they show African music and pay the poor African

musicians. If they put my clip on the TV often I would get plenty of money and I work here and would spend my money here but they send the money off to America. On the radio as well if it's not South African it's American. They are focused on this American music I don't know why. These Americans are rich enough already. These SABC can say it's the market but they need to be told they should mix more African now with this American music. We are not against the Americans. Even I like some of it. But when they play two American songs they should mix in two Senegalese or Congolese or Morocco. Now it's 10 at night until morning American that's not right. When you go to America you will not see our videos on their television. You could be there three months and you wouldn't see one.

- *When you see African Americans do you think they are more American or African?*

**Liwoso** – They are American not African. They think like Americans they are no longer African. Their skins don't make them African. They don't have an African modesty. In an African village women won't allow themselves to be naked like they allow themselves to be on their videos. They talk as if Africa was their home but they don't really still have a connection.

- *Where does the taste for risk, danger to travel come from in the Congolese?*

**Liwoso** – A Congolese friend can leave with no money saying he's going to Japan and three months later he will call you from Japan and you won't know how he got there. People without passports will somehow get to Europe. It's a human thing.

Mobutu ran the same system, he loved it. He contributed to this courage of the Congolese, article 15, system D, *debrouillez vous*. There is also article 11, walk by foot. When there is no bus or taxi you say I'm doing article 11. *Faites article onze*. The Congolese learnt to suffer and to take risks. They habituated themselves with beer and music. You will find Congolese everywhere in Africa as well as Japan or Canada everywhere. Vundumuna means to put everything in disorder in the slang of Kikongo, to bust everything up. The term Hindubill implies clairvoyance because the bills always know what's going to happen in the films, that's why they always survive in those Westerns. He always knows more than you. Money is L'ar in Hindubill. The Congolese are generally non-violent by nature. They respect strangers. In Zambia they are not peaceful. Tanzanians and Angolans, Sudanese all live peacefully with us. The Brazzavilleois are jealous of us. The Zambians are not at ease with us. I had many problems there like we have here they are not at ease with immigration. In Tanzania they are relaxed. We have new dances all the time. It's difficult to copy our music because we change all the time.

## Appendix 3

### Population Statistics

|                | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2004 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Africa</b>  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Urban (%)      | 15   | 19   | 23   | 28   | 32   | 36   | 38   |
| Pop mil.       | 224  | 282  | 364  | 479  | 636  | 812  | 906  |
| <b>Congo</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Urban (%)      | 19   | 22   | 30   | 29   | 28   | 30   | 33   |
| Pop mil.       | 10   | 12   | 14   | 20   | 27   | 34   | 37   |
| Kinshasa       | .17  | .45  | 1.4  | 2.2  | 3.4  | 4.7  | 5.7  |
| Lubumbashi     | .12  | .2   | .33  | .47  | .66  | .91  | 1.1  |
| <b>Nigeria</b> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Urban (%)      | 11   | 15   | 20   | 27   | 35   | 44   | 48   |
| Pop mil.       | 30   | 37   | 48   | 64   | 86   | 115  | 130  |
| Lagos          | .29  | .76  | 1.4  | 2.6  | 4.8  | 8.7  | 11.1 |
| <b>Kenya</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Urban (%)      | 6    | 7    | 10   | 16   | 25   | 36   | 42   |
| Pop mil.       | 6    | 8    | 11   | 16   | 24   | 31   | 33   |
| Nairobi        | .09  | .22  | .53  | .86  | 1.4  | 2.2  | 2.8  |
| Mombasa        | .1   | .17  | .25  | .35  | .48  | .69  | .89  |

**Tanzania** (United Republic of)

|             |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Urban %     | 4   | 5   | 7   | 15  | 22  | 32  | 37  |
| Pop mil.    | 8   | 10  | 14  | 19  | 26  | 35  | 38  |
| Dar es Sal. | .08 | .16 | .39 | .82 | 1.3 | 2.1 | 2.7 |
| Arusha      |     |     |     |     |     | .74 | 1.3 |

**South Africa**

|              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Urban (%)    | 43  | 47  | 48  | 48  | 49  | 55  | 58  |
| Pop mil.     | 14  | 17  | 23  | 29  | 37  | 44  | 45  |
| Johannesburg | .9  | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 2.7 | 3.3 |
| East Rand    | .55 | .68 | .9  | 1.1 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 3.0 |
| Cape Town    | .62 | .8  | 1.1 | 1.6 | 2.1 | 2.8 | 3.1 |

United Nations. 2004. Available from; <esa.un.org/unup> (Accessed June 2005)

See also Encyclopaedia Britannica. 2004. Available from: <xist.org/cy> (Accessed June 2005)

## Appendix 4

### Television and Radio Ownership<sup>494</sup>

|                 | Radio  |         | Television |         | Population |
|-----------------|--------|---------|------------|---------|------------|
|                 | Total  | Per/000 | Total      | Per/000 | Millions   |
| <b>DRC</b>      |        |         |            |         |            |
| 1970            | 3 000  | 148     | 6          | 0.3     | 20         |
| 1980            | 5 200  | 193     | 10         | 0.4     |            |
| 1990            | 7 735  | 207     | 2 018      | 54      |            |
| 1997            | 18 030 | 376     | 6 478      | 135     |            |
| <b>Kenya</b>    |        |         |            |         |            |
| 1970            | 265    | 23      | 16         | 1.4     |            |
| 1980            | 650    | 39      | 62         | 3.7     |            |
| 1990            | 2 000  | 85      | 225        | 9.6     |            |
| 1997            | 3 070  | 108     | 730        | 26      | 28.5       |
| <b>Tanzania</b> |        |         |            |         |            |
| 1970            | 800    | 58      | 4          | 0.3     | 14         |
| 1980            | 1 500  | 81      | 7          | 0.4     |            |
| 1990            | 5 000  | 196     | 40         | 1.6     |            |

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<sup>494</sup>UNESCO 2005. Available from:  
[http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/yearbook/tables%5CCultAndCom%5CTable\\_IV\\_14\\_Africa.html](http://www.uis.unesco.org/statsen/statistics/yearbook/tables%5CCultAndCom%5CTable_IV_14_Africa.html)

|      |       |     |     |     |      |
|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| 1997 | 8 800 | 280 | 103 | 3.3 | 31.5 |
|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|------|

### **S. Africa**

|      |        |     |       |     |    |
|------|--------|-----|-------|-----|----|
| 1970 | 4 000  | 181 | 70    | 3.2 | 22 |
| 1980 | 8 000  | 290 | 2 010 | 73  |    |
| 1990 | 11 450 | 337 | 3 700 | 109 |    |
| 1997 | 13 750 | 355 | 5 200 | 134 | 39 |

### **Nigeria**

|      |        |     |       |     |     |
|------|--------|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| 1970 | 2 500  | 50  | 75    | 1.5 | 50  |
| 1980 | 7 000  | 107 | 550   | 8.4 |     |
| 1990 | 18 700 | 215 | 3 500 | 40  |     |
| 1997 | 23 500 | 226 | 6 900 | 66  | 104 |

### **Senegal**

|      |       |     |     |     |     |
|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1970 | 350   | 84  | 1   | 0.2 | 4.2 |
| 1980 | 550   | 99  | 8   | 1.4 |     |
| 1990 | 830   | 113 | 265 | 36  |     |
| 1997 | 1 240 | 141 | 361 | 41  | 9   |

The following interview gives an idea of the extent to which radio and television came to serve Congolese musicians. The interview was conducted in Johannesburg. Willy Mwembu works in a CD and video shop called *Cadence Tropicale* selling Congolese music. He grew up in Lubumbashi so his experience of radio and



television gives a good idea of how the music coming out of Kinshasa made its way to the regional capitals. There was a small gathering of Congolese expatriates and immigrants in the shop when the interview was conducted. This group also contributed their thoughts and memories to the discussion.<sup>495</sup>

- *When I speak with Congolese people they all know the story of their own music so well and they all tell the same story. So how do you of the younger generation know the same story as your parents?*

**Willy** - First of all it comes from television programmes, one in particular called *Bakolo Misiki* (also the name of Wendo Kolosoy's band). That's still being broadcast today, every Thursday. Oh yes. That's how Congolese people are so well informed about their music. It means 'The greats, the old masters, of music.' Like Kallé Jeef, Nico, Wendo Kolosoy. They show old programmes of them regularly. We never saw them playing ourselves but we've seen them on the TV. Then we also saw them on Sunday on another programme called *Les Invitées*. Kallé Jeef would appear in a *Grand Boubou*, like the ones people wear in West Africa.

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<sup>495</sup> The radio and television schedules that informants remembered from the 1980s and 1990s are as follows.

TV and Radio Programming in DRC and Zaire.

OZRT

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Bakolo Music | 12-14hrs Sunday or everyday?       |
|              | 20.30-21.30 Thursday every 2 weeks |

|            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| Hit Parade | 15-18hrs Saturday |
|------------|-------------------|

|          |                   |
|----------|-------------------|
| Variétés | 21-24hrs Saturday |
|----------|-------------------|

RTNC 1997 onwards

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Invitée | 13-15hrs Sunday. Lively talk show with musicians. |
|---------|---|

Théâtre de chez nous.

|               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Grand Bazaar. | 15hrs. Culture Theatre Film Music. |
|---------------|------------------------------------|

2 songs at mid day everyday.

Then everyday at midday there would be old music on the TV, rumba, relaxed. We would see it and hear it on OZRT. There was only one channel for the whole country so we got the same TV and radio in Lubumbashi where I grew up as the people of Kinshasa. Each region had its own radio station but at mid day they would all broadcast the same music programme. That programme was in French.

**Richard** - The timeless music of the second generation. It is lodged in our minds because the radio and TV always played that music, in the nightclubs, in the bars you will hear it so that music will never disappear because all Congolese are like that.

- *When the students were coming back from school at lunchtime would you hear this old music in the streets in the 80s?*

**Richard** - Yes. It was on all the radios and TV's that people had. This is music that is representative of us. Our parents love this music of Franco and so do we. It is part of us.

- *What about other music programmes for new music.*

**Willy** - On Saturday night every week there was a show called *Variété*, and then another called *Zaireois* that started on Saturday at midday, which was full of different music and musicians. Then there was another programme called *Hit Parade* on Sunday that was on at 3 o'clock. That was for the Top 20 and it lasted two hours. So there was four hours of music on Saturday and two hours on Sunday.

*-What years is that?*

**Richard** - Ever since I can remember in the 80s but I think in the 70s too. Now it has changed since Kabila arrived in 1997, 1998 but before that when it was OZRT that is how it was. Now it is called RTNC (Radio Télé National Congolaise).

*- Has RTNC carried on with the music?*

**Richard** - Oh yes. But in those days there was only one station. Since Kabila came there are many.

*- Did television disappear during the war?*

**Richard** - No, no. It carried on right through that time. The name of the music show changed for Sunday to *Invitées* and that's still the same programme today at midday on Sunday. This programme started maybe at three o'clock for two hours. It's for music news, invited guests talking to a show host, who's releasing, who's touring and so on for music fans. Congolese people keep up with this news so they can discuss it on the streets, you know 'have you heard the news about Koffi or JB or whatever?'

*Bakolo* music is on the radio everyday after the mid day news, after school, with non-stop oldies, Nico, Grand Kalle, music because there's no need to announce it

because everybody knows the songs. On the TV they invite these old greats that are still living to talk and play a little in front of an invited audience.

*-Are there any other programmes that have been important for music, like in the night?*

**Richard** - In the night there is nothing but Congolese music, it's not the time for sleeping.

There was also another cultural programme called *Grand Bazaar* that was on Wednesday. Then it was not just music but a general programme about culture. So there was theatre and films as well as music. It was very popular. It was still going on in the 90s and it's been going on since the 70s.

**Group:** *Bakolo* music was on the radio everyday but it was also on the TV on Thursday's once every two weeks, because the other Thursday we had *Théâtre de Chez Nous*. It was on at eight thirty for an hour. It was very popular. Then everyday after the news at midday they would play two or three songs that would be the most recent hits. Now there are many channels and they all play so much music. The one channel system lasted until Kabila came.

## Appendix 5

### Dance

The semantics of the words for the four main dances and music of each generation are hotly debated. The origins have not determined their destiny. They have come to stand for the music of each generation after first being used to refer to specific dances. Rumba has obvious Latin origins for both a dance and a specific rhythm. Much of the Latin music that came to be called rumba in Congo was in fact Cuban *son*. According to Stewart (2000: 21) the tendency to substitute the word rumba for *son* in the Congo may be purely because rumba sounds better to Lingala speakers than *son*. *Soukous* comes from the French word *secouer* to shake but is often pronounced *soukousse*. When Congolese music came to the attention of music lovers in Europe in the 1980s *soukous* became the word by which the music of the late second and the early period of the third generation came to be known. See Ken Braun (1999: 459) on some of the different uses to which the word has been put. *Kwassa kwassa* likewise has a French association derived, as it is, from *C'est quoi ça?* This became the name that was used for the music of the third generation in East Africa. The dance was popularised in East Africa by Kanda Bongo Man though there are other strong claims for who invented the dance mentioned in the following section. *Ndombolo*, though it sounds distinctly Lingala, has no particular meaning according to most informants but it is a dance that has come to denote the music of the fourth or Wenge generation. It is one of Wenge's founders, J.B.Mpiana, who

claims to have invented the dance though many informants say that it is a dance that was taken from the streets, where adolescents continually come up with new dances.

Loko Massengo was at the forefront of the movement in the third generation when dances became so important to Congolese music. When he moved to Paris in the 1980s along with so many others the demands of different markets and the cost constraints of international travel demanded that bands had to be flexible about the inclusion of dancers in shows. Wuta Mayi moved to Paris with Loko Massengo in the 1980s.

- *When you played with the Quatre Étoiles did you have dancers?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes in Europe as in Africa. In Cameroon we took dancers but not in Kenya. To Burkina we took dancers.

- *Who trains the dancers?*

**Wuta Mayi** - The dancers themselves come with their own choreography. We give them cassettes of our music and they go and practice at home. After that we practice together.

- *Where did you find the dancers?*

**Wuta Mayi** - In Paris.

- *Are there many there?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Too many. (Trop beaucoup.) Whether white or black, whether from the Antilles.

- *Is the dance that important for you?*

**Wuta Mayi** - It depends. It depends on the promoter. If a promoter from Dakar says bring dancers we bring dancers. For us personally it doesn't interest us *that* much but if they demand it of us we are obliged....

- *If you take Papa Wemba, or Wenge they have their dances like Kiliwanzeza, each generation has their dance. What are the dances of your generation?*

**Wuta Mayi** - The rumba.

- *What about the dances of the second generation?*

**Wuta Mayi** - I don't interest myself so much in them. We are revolutionising the rumba.

- *Rumba is more than a dance though?*

**Wuta Mayi** - It is the base of the music.

- *Is there a dance the rumba?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Yes the slow dance with a man and a woman.

- *What about Soukous?*

**Wuta Mayi** It started out as a dance but now it is a rhythm as well. If you knew the real *soukousse* from those times then if you saw it you would recognise it. Now everyone dances it in his or her own way. But the *soukousse* rhythm has become unique. Voila.

- *Did Kabasele play that rhythm? I thought Franco played soukousse not only rumba like Wendo?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Franco got people dancing on the *dance* of *soukousse*. But the rhythm as it developed became the rhythm of the third generation.

- *I thought the main dances of the four generations were rumba, then soukous, then kwassa kwassa, then ndombolo? People here think soukous is the music?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Those are the dances. In those days, I personally was still young. The generation of Franco, Nico, Tabu Ley avec Bantous de la Capitale au Congo Brazza



got people dancing the dance *soukousse* but at that time the rhythm *soukousse* didn't exist.

- *Did Zaiko start it then?*

**Wuta Mayi** - Zaiko played the *cavacha* right up to *ndombolo*.

This interview with a Congolese migrant in South Africa working in a Congolese record shop in Johannesburg reveals how television came to play a role in increasing the importance of dance to the music and disseminating dance culture from Kinshasa around the country.

- *What about other music programmes for new music?*

**Richard** - On Saturday night every week there was a show called *Variétés*, and then another called *Zaireois* that started on Saturday at midday, which was full of different music and musicians. Then there was another programme called *Hit Parade* on Sunday that was on at 3 o'clock. That was for the Top 20 for two hours. So there was four hours of music on Saturday and two hours on Sunday. *Variétés* was put on in the evening on Saturday as people were preparing to go out to nightclubs and bars. It started at nine and finished at midnight when people headed for the clubs. That way you could learn the dances before going to the clubs. When a hit was released then you would want to learn that dance, so that you could show people that you were *à la page* (up to date). It's still like that. So you watch for a new album say by

Werra Son being released and then you watch the dance on the TV and then when you go to the nightclub you wait for the new album to be played and then you dance the new dance to show you're á la page.

- *What years is that?*

**Richard** - Ever since I can remember in the 80s but I think in the 70s too.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> Johannesburg 13/03/04

## **Dances**

The list of dances for each of the generations is the fruit of long drawn out discussions with members of each generation who are familiar with or invented each of the dances.<sup>497</sup> An attempt at a fairly exhaustive list is provided here with some dates and translations in order to convey the productivity of Congolese artists in the dance department and because it is not provided elsewhere. One thing should be kept in mind with this list of dances. Many of these are not seen as distinct dances but as specific phases that can be incorporated into the more generic dances that distinguish the four generations. The line between a phase and a dance is bound to be fuzzy.<sup>498</sup> The dances by which each of the generations are known are distinct from each other though.

### **The First Generation. 1930-55 European and Latin Dance – Rumba**

#### **European**

Waltz

Polka Piquée

Quadrille

Swing

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<sup>497</sup> Ndaywel è Nziem has provided a more limited and un-categorised inventory of dances 1998: 481 on which this list draws.

<sup>498</sup> Thanks to Mobhe, the manager of one of the founders of the third generation Thu Zahina, for this insight.

**Latin**

Rumba

Mambo

Bolero

Cha Cha Cha

Merengue

Beguen

Calypso

Son – Guaguanco

Tango

**Congolese**

Maringa

Agbaya

**The Second Generation Dances. 1955-1970 Rumba - Soukous.**

| <b>Dance</b> | <b>Translation/Action</b>      | <b>Creator</b>  | <b>Date</b> |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Apollo 11    | Apollo                         | TPOK  | c.1969      |
| Boucher      | Cutting action of a<br>butcher | African Fiesta<br><br>International<br><br>(Also claimed by<br>Ya Honda et Balla) | 1964        |

|                  |   |                                    |       |
|------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------|
| Cha-Cha-Cha      | Based on original   | TPOK                               | 1956  |
| Esasa            |   | Bowane                             | 1960? |
| Guaben           |   | Vévé                               |       |
| Jobs             |   | African Fiesta<br>International    |       |
| Kara-Kara        |   | African Jazz                       |       |
| <b>Kiri-Kiri</b> | Like the twist  | African Fiesta<br>Sukisa. Dr. Nico | 1968  |
| Loyenge-Bulubulu |   | Maquisards                         |       |
| Mabeta           |   | Vox Africa                         | 1960  |
| Mambenga         |   | Jean Bombenga                      | 1969  |
| Mayenu           |   | TPOK                               |       |
| Mobylette        | Revving action and<br>seated position used<br>on a mobylette. | African Fiesta<br>Sukisa           |       |
| Mokulumbembe     |   | Bowane                             | 1960? |
| Mutwashi         | Luba Dance from<br>Eastern Congo                              | Tshala<br>Muana/African<br>Jazz    |       |
| Sous-Djoum       |   | African Fiesta<br>National         |       |
| Soukous (se)     | To shake.   | African Fiesta<br>International    | 1966  |
| Yeke Yeke        |   | African Jazz                       |       |

### The Third Generation. 1970 – 1990 Soukous to Saccadé to Kwassa Kwassa

| Dance                 | Translation/Action                           | Creator             | Date                     |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Ba La Joie (Awa Kaka) |  | Viva-la-Musica      | 1978                     |
| Bidunda-Dunda         | The action of a gourmand eating voraciously. | Trio Madjesi        | 1972                     |
| La Bionda             | The Short Skirt                              | Stukas              | 1968 or 1978             |
| Bolowa                |  | ZLL                 | 1970                     |
| Morowa                | My type of person                            | ZLL                 | 1986                     |
| Canneton à L'aise     | Duckling go easy                             | Minzota Wella Wella |                          |
| Cavacha               | Latin rhythm                                 | ZLL                 | 1972<br>(KazadiwaMukuna) |
| Choquez retardez      | Act shocked and retreat.                     | ZLL                 |                          |
| Comme à l'école       | Like at school.                              | Viva La Musica      | 1989                     |
| Coo Coo Dindon        | Coo coo like a turkey                        | Viva La Musica      | 1979                     |
| Crapaud Crapaud       | Toad Toad - Toad movement.                   | Stukas              |                          |

|                  |  |   |                                  |
|------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Dallas Passeport |  | Langa Langa Stars   | 1981                             |
| Dindon Griffé    | Turkey movement<br>with show of<br>designer label –<br>taken from coo coo<br>dindon. | Viva La Musica  | 1980                             |
| Disco            |  | ZLL   |                                  |
| Ekonda Sacade    | Savage bighting<br>insect that jiggles<br>about.                                     | Lita Bembe of the<br>Stukas and ZLL<br>Yoka Lokole?<br>Derived from<br>Mongo dances | 1972<br>(KazadiwaMukuna<br>1980) |
| Engundu          |  | Lay Lay   |                                  |
| Esakala          |  | Groupe Mai-<br>Ndombe   |                                  |
| Ensombi          |  | Empire Bakuba   | 1974                             |
| Frenchen         |  | Viva-la-Musica  | 1983                             |
| Isankele         | Equator language   | Swede Swede<br>Mongo derived  |                                  |
| Keke Kumech      | World Cup. 123 to<br>the side  | Victoria Eleison  | 1982                             |
| Kintekuna moto   |  | Swede Swede<br>Mongo derived  | 1994                             |
| Kouro-Bondo      |  | Bella Bella   |                                  |

|                  |  |  |                              |
|------------------|--|--|------------------------------|
| Kuanza           | To itch and scratch<br>all over  | Empire Bakuba  |                              |
| Kurunyenge       |  | Viva-la-Musica   |                              |
| Kwassa-Kwassa    | C'est quoi ça?/<br>Bent leg position<br>head still with<br>flicking hand<br>movement | Bana<br>Lingwala/Jaenora –<br>Claimed by VLM<br>and Kanda B M<br>and Empire Bakuba<br><br>'Reminiscent of a<br>Kongo social<br>dance.'<br><br>KazadiwaMukuna | 1986-1996                    |
| Lofimbo          | To beat someone/<br>Action of.   | Viva-la-Musica   | 1973/4                       |
| Lubelu Tadi-Tadi | Albert Stone-Stone   | Minzota Wella-<br>Wella  |                              |
| Mabata-Laef      | Walk like a duck   | Bella-Bella  |                              |
| Machota          |  | Viva-la-Musica   |                              |
| Madiaba          | Stolen from the<br>street  | Bana Lemba   | 1988<br><br>(KazadiwaMukuna) |
| Mali             |  | Swede Swede  |                              |
| Mansota          |  | Viva-la-Musica   | 1982                         |
| Mapeka           | Shoulder   | Yoka Lokole  |                              |
| Maradonna        |  | Wende Musica   |                              |



|                               |   |                   |      |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|------|
| Marteau Kibota                | Hit with a<br>hammer/motion of                                    | Zaiko Wawa        |      |
| Masasi Calculez               | Take good aim<br>with a gun                                       | Empire Bakuba     | 1986 |
| Mata-Kita                     | Up<br><br>Down/Movement<br>in bent leg position                   | Stukas            | 1979 |
| Mbiri-Mbiri                   | Fanny<br><br>Fanny/Shocked<br>expression and<br>covering of groin | Langa Langa Stars | 1983 |
| Mislelele                     |   | ZLL               | 1987 |
| Monko Nyon<br><br>Nyon        | Dance derived<br>from Tetela ethnic<br>group                      | Viva-la-Musica    | 1977 |
| Odimba Monku<br><br>Nyon Nyon |   | Viva-la-Musica    | 1977 |
| Mombombo                      |   | Stukas            |      |
| Motors Retro                  |   |                   |      |
| Le Musselman                  | The Muslim  | Viva-la-Musica    |      |
| La Firenze                    | The Florence  | Viva-la-Musica    |      |
| Muteta Teta                   |   | Choc Stars        |      |
| Nager Sous-marin              | Swim under<br>water/action of                                     | Empire Bakuba     |      |

|                   |                                    |  |  |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Nyekesse Miguel   | Swing Miguel                       | Viva-la-Musica   | 1978   |
| N'goss            |                                    |  | 1977-87<br>KazadiwaMukuna                                      |
| O Tshenge         |                                    | Libaku de Gina   |  |
| Osaka Dynastie    | Osaka Dynasty                      | Stukas   |  |
| Parachute         | Parachute                          | Zaiko Wawa   |  |
| Pesa Posa         |                                    | ZLL  |  |
| Pompe Bijection   |                                    | Victoria Eleison   |  |
| Rick Son          | Rick's sound                       | Viva-la-Musica   |  |
| Rikitele Ja Rwaka |                                    | Station Japan  |  |
| Roboti Robota     | Move like a robot.                 | Bozi Boziana –<br>Choc Stars (Based<br>on smurf dance.<br>P.311 Stewart. |  |
| Rumba Rock        | Rumba Rock                         | Viva-la-Musica   |  |
| Saccadé           | Jerky halting<br>forward movement. | ZLL  | 1970? A primary<br>rhythm of the 3 <sup>rd</sup><br>generation |
| Sengola           |                                    | Grand Zaiko Wawa   |  |
| Sentiment Elela   | Give the people<br>feeling.        | Viva-la-Musica   | 1977   |
| Se-Ya             |                                    | Viva-la-Musica   | 1986   |
| Silauka           |                                    | ZLL  |  |
| Sonzo-Ma          |                                    | ZLL  |  |

|               |                              |                              |                           |
|---------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sundama       | Aller en bas.<br>To go down. | Swede Swede<br>Mongo derived | 1992<br>(KazadiwaMukuna)  |
| Tara          |                              | ZLL                          |                           |
| Toyo Motors   |                              | Stukas                       |                           |
| Tsheke Tsheke |                              | Tsheke-Tsheke<br>Love        |                           |
| Tukunyema     |                              | ZLL                          |                           |
| Vandela       |                              | Empire Bakuba                |                           |
| Volant        |                              | ZLL                          |                           |
| Watsha-Watsha |                              | ZLL                          |                           |
| Wondo-Stock   |                              | ZLL                          |                           |
| Yeye          |                              | Anti Choc                    |                           |
| Zekete-zekete |                              |                              | 1977-87<br>KazadiwaMukuna |

#### Fourth Generation. From Kwassa Kwassa to N'dombolo

|             |  |  |        |
|-------------|--|--|--------|
| Araka       |  | Swede Swede  |        |
| Atutana     | 'Sexual touching between man and woman.'   | Swede Swede  |        |
| Bilolo      | Sea Vegetable  | Choc Choc Loyenge<br>Wenge (Also claim it)<br>J.B.Mpiana | 1984?  |
| Bouloukoutu | i) Brutal social change.<br>ii) A hairstyle.<br>iii) Movement made around head with hand.  | Viva-la-Musica   | 1991   |
| Cheque      |  | Viva-la- Musica  | 1996   |
| Helicopter  | Helicopter/action  | Station Japan  |        |
| Kisanola    | Hand action behind head as if brushing hair. To steal so much the person has nothing left. | Werra Son  | 2005   |
| Ki Wanzenza | Like a snail?  | MNR Victoria   | c.2001 |

|               |   |  |      |
|---------------|---|--|------|
|               | Movement of<br>left then right<br>foot outwards or<br>'visitors sexual<br>pump.'  | Eleison<br>Tinplan   |      |
| Koyimbi Ko    | A way for a<br>father calling for<br>children in<br>villages. 'come<br>here'<br>Voted best dance<br>by journalist<br>association<br>ACMCO | King Kester<br>Emmenya band.<br>Kikongo Seluo:<br>creator. | 2002 |
| Mingi Mingi   |   | Viva-la-Musica   |      |
| Motuka monene | Big Car blocking<br>the way (Mobutu<br>or implying a<br>large bum<br>blocking.)   | Station Japan  | 1984 |
| N'dombolo     | According to<br>Werra Son a<br>small medicinal<br>tree.   | JP Mpiana from Feux<br>de l'amour album                    | 1997 |

|                 |   |                        |      |
|-----------------|---|------------------------|------|
|                 | 'A dance for women with big buttocks.'  |                        |      |
| Nsu Nsengeli    |   | Viva-la-Musica         | 1999 |
| Tindika Lokito  | Give me a good strong beer.   | Wenge                  | 2001 |
| Tora            | Hands in the air lifting two weights.   | Station Japan          |      |
| Tshaku Libondas | The parrot that talks too much (reference to Koffi?)/ Motion with hand in the ear | King Kester<br>Emmenya | 2002 |
| Tuna Sortie     |   | Viva-la-Musica         | 1994 |

The dances listed below are claimed by Zaiko Langa Langa (Zaiko Langa Langa 2004) as their own on their website but some are dances they may not have created but still perform. See above for counter claims over provenance. These dances are listed here to give an idea of how productive a single band, and a band that is seen as emblematic of the third generation, have been in producing dances.

1971 - Levole - Nguabin

1972 - Six Motoba

1973 - Cavacha (Kwempa - Tambour - Mundial)

1974 - Cavacha (Wondostock), Choquez (Pamba Pamba ye)

1975 - Choquez (Pasola - Pas de Kamamyola - Siatapata)

1977 - Choquez (Siatapata Lokolo), Washa Washa

1978 - Washa Washa (Sodoma), Sonzo

1979 - Disco Tara, Pusa Bango, Tindika

1980 - Volant Guidon

1981 - Funky

1982 - Zekete Zekete

1987 - Mahia 0 - Mahia Swede

1988 - Madiaba

1990 - Mayebo

1991 - Etutana

1995 - Othsule

1997 - Ndombolo

1998 - Cimetiere Kintambo

1999 - Amakamba

2001 - Zembe

## **Appendix 6**

### **‘Class’ amongst the musicians**

Congolese musicians came from across the class spectrum. This broad class origin is also true of their appeal. The public association of musicians with ‘voyous’ (louts or ruffians) in the first two generations meant many musicians from more well to do families hid their musical activities from parents and teachers when in their youth. This was true of Tabu Ley and Sam Mangwana for instance (Mpisi 2004: 65). Many of the musicians interviewed for this study went to great lengths to hide their work as musicians when still under parental and school supervision because of the negative reputation that was enjoyed by musicians. This bad reputation may have had more to do with youth cults and culture, nightclubs, nightlife, alcohol and the prostitution industries that existed, and still exist, so close to the world of music than it does with the history and lives of the musicians themselves. Congolese popular music was associated in the public imagination with the disreputable world of the street at night. Despite this after independence some musicians, especially Franco, came to be associated with Mobutu and the political cum commercial elite and this could change their status. The proximity of the musicians to the new political class was signalled at the negotiations for independence when African Jazz, under the leadership of Joseph Kabesele, also travelled to Brussels to entertain their political compatriots.

Even before independence the proximity of the bar world of the politician and the musician meant their worlds overlapped (Gonodola 1997). Musicians were among



the friends of leading politicians like Lumumba at independence. In the third and fourth generations the perception of musicians as low life has changed even though they occupy positions across the social spectrum and keeping in mind the specificities and fluidity of what can be referred to as 'class' in the Congo. Many musicians in the third and fourth generations started out while still students. Any such education could accord some degree of status. The wealth and fame of the stars like Werra Son definitely now places them amongst the elite.

The geographic and social diversity of the originators of the four generations is indicative of musicians changing status. An originator of the first generation, 'Wendo' Antoine Kolosoy came from Mushier 150 miles upriver from Leopoldville. He worked as a greaser on riverboats. He also worked as a boxer and travelled to Cameroon and Senegal as such before settling down as a singer/guitarist based in Leopoldville. Henri Bowane came from Coquilhatville (now Mbandaka). Kabesele came from a relatively prominent family and was considered an intellectual having finished three years of secondary school, sufficient to make him eligible for coveted white-collar work in the 1950s (Mangwana 2004). Franco's father was a railway worker and brought in a reasonable income but he died when Franco was 11, leaving Franco as the male head of the family. Without much further education he took to supporting the family by helping his mother sell doughnuts in the Wenge ya Bayaka market (Ewens 1994: 50). Tabu Ley Rochereau's father worked as a clerk in the capital (Tabu Ley 2005). White-collar employment meant Tabu Ley is seen as having come from a 'good family'. He finished his secondary education at Catholic mission school of Saint-Pierre and Saint-Anne (Mpisi 2003: 79-85). Nyoka Longo of

Zaiko studied at the college of Boboto, formerly Collège Albert ler, in the exclusive borough of Gombe in Kinshasa (Nyoka Longo 2006). Tshala Muana lost her father, a military officer, at the age of six when he was killed by Mulelist guerrillas. After finishing some years of secondary education she began working in cultural troops in her hometown of Kananga in Kasai in the early 1970s<sup>499</sup>

Many musicians that established themselves in Kinshasa came from other parts of the country, as did much of the Kinois population. Kanda Bongo Man came from the region of Bandundu, as does Werra Son. Sam Mangwana came with his parents from Angola to Kinshasa as an exile during the struggle for independence. In the fourth generation the origins and identification of musicians with the street, with what in Marxist terminology would be called the lumpen proletariat, seems to have changed. This is partly as a consequence of the student backgrounds of the third generation of musicians and partly due to the wealth of the superstars of the fourth generation. Koffi Olomide finished higher education, not only going to university but to university in Europe in Bordeaux (Afropop 'Koffi Olomide' 2006). According to Werra Son he went to university in Kinshasa (Kinshasa 2005) and studied commerce, as did JB Mpiana (Johannesburg 2004).

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<sup>499</sup> Interview conducted by Gregory Mthemba-Salter Kinshasa 07/10/04. Tshala Muana's official website (Muana 2005) and further information in the Music Encyclopaedia of Popular Music (2006).

## **Appendix 7**

### **Tanzanian Bands**

#### **Private Bands formed before independence.**

African Association Jazz Band (1930s)

Dar es Salaam Jazz (1930s)

Morogoro Jazz Band. Salum Abdullah (d.1964) with Mbaraka Mwinshehe until 1973

Cuban Marimba (Late 1940s)

Lucky Star Jazz Band (1950s Bagamoyo)

Tanganyika Jazz Band (mid 1950s)

Ulanga Jazz Band (mid 1950s Ulanga)

Kilwa Jazz Band (1958)

Western Jazz Band (1959)

Chezimba Jazz Band

Njohole Jazz Band

Sambulumaa Band

Kiko Kids

#### **State Bands formed after independence.**

JKT Kimbunga (National Service Army\*) 1960s

JWTZ and Mwenge Jazz Band and Kimilimuli (Tanzania People's Defence Force\*)

Polisi Jazz (Dar es Salaam Police Force) 1960s

Magereza Jazz Band (Prison Authority\*) 1960s

DDC Mlimani Park Orchestra: *Sikinde* 1978

(Dar es Salaam District Development Corp.\*)

Bandari Band (Dar es Salaam Port Authority)

Reli Band (Tanzanian Railway Authority)

Dar International Airport Band.

UDA Jazz Band (Usafiri Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Transport Authority)

BIMA Band (National Insurance Corporation)

Urafiki Jazz Band (Urafiki Textile Mill)

Vijana Jazz. 1971(CCM Youth League)

OTTU: *Msondo* 1964 (Organisation of Tanzanian Trade Unions. Previously NUTA and JUWATA)

Washiriki TZ Stars. (Cooperative Union of Tanzania associated generally with farmers.)

\* Also sponsored *Taarab* bands.

**Private Tanzanian formed after independence.**

National Panasonic Sounds

Ngorongoro Heroes Band (Also the name of the national football team.)

Orchestra Continental

Orchestra Toma Toma

Super Volcano with Mbaraka Mwinshehe (1973 –1979 Mwihshehe d.)

Afro 70 Band

Lego Stars

None of these bands established or maintained a following on a par with the state/party funded Tanzanian bands or the Congolese bands except Super Volcano and the two MK bands. Tanzanian bands formed after privatization in the 1990s began to compete with the Congolese bands.

Bantu Group

Bico Stars Group

Mawenzi Stars

4<sup>th</sup> Generation private bands 1990s and 2000s

M.K. Beats (Part Congolese) 1990s

M.K. Sounds (Part Congolese) c.1992

Tanzania One Theatre (Part party part private sponsored.)

African Stars. *Twanga Pepeta* 1994

|                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| African Revolution. <i>Tam Tam</i> | 1999   |
| Chuchu Sound                       | 2002   |
| Tatu Nane                          | 1990   |
| Beta Musica                        | c.1990 |

Local private bands with a Tanzanian sound.

Shikamoo Jazz: A band made up of veteran Tanzanian musicians formed 1993.

Kilimanjaro Band: *Wana Njenje* Formed 1970 as ‘The Love Bugs’. Kilimanjaro name adopted 1989.

Sources for this data are interviews in Dar es Salaam and Askew (2002: 282).

## **Appendix 8**

### **Articles on Xenophobia in South Africa**

For an overview of statistical research on xenophobic attitudes see Jonathon Crush (2001) 'The Dark Side of Democracy: Immigration, Xenophobia and Human Rights in South Africa'. On the emergence of new migrant identities see Marion Ryan Sinclair (1999). See the South African Migration Project (SAMP) website for an extensive database on the subject of migration and xenophobia (2007).

Other articles on the same subject include:

Jonathon Crush and Wade Peddleton (2004) 'Regionalizing Xenophobia? Citizen Attitudes to Immigration and Refugee Policy in Southern Africa'.

Cindy Warner and Gillian Finchilescu (2003) 'Living with Prejudice: Xenophobia and Race'; Ingrid Palmay (2002) 'Refugees, Safety and Xenophobia in South African Cities: The Role of Local Government'.

Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (2001) 'A Foreign Experience: Violence, Crime and Xenophobia during South Africa's Transition'.

Ransford Danso and David McDonald (2000) 'Writing Xenophobia: Immigration and the Press in Post-Apartheid South Africa'.

R Mattes, DM Taylor, Da McDonald, A Poore and W Richmond. (1999) 'Still Waiting for the Barbarians: SA Attitudes to Immigrants and Immigration'.

David McDonald, John Gay, Lovemore Zinyama, Robert Mattes, Fiona De Vletter (1998) 'Challenging Xenophobia: Myths and Realities of Cross-Border Migration in Southern Africa'.

Comaroff, Jean (2002) 'Alien-Nation: Zombies, Immigrants, and Millennial Capitalism'; Croucher (1998) 'South Africa's illegal aliens: constructing national boundaries in a post-apartheid state',

Klaaren, J. (2001) 'Inside Illegality: Migration Policing in South Africa after Apartheid'.

LB. Landlau and K. Jacobsen (2004) 'Refugees in the New Johannesburg'.

### **Newspaper Articles from the Mail and Guardian**

'Chasing a better life. Somalis find xenophobia in SA' 01 September 2006

'We didn't come here to be killed' Joubert 01 September 2006

'Refugees in SA: an ongoing struggle'. Moyiga Nduru. June 2005

'Pan-Africanism tempers xenophobic media'. McDonald and Jacobs. 12 April 2006

'Ode to my Yeoville' Prabhala. 16 August 2005 03:00

'Government criticised for treatment of detained foreigners'. Evans. 02 November 2004

'OK to be foreign if you've got hooves'. Fikile-Ntsikelelo Moya. 04 Jun 2004

'Whips, insults for Zim refugees in SA' 02 Jan 2004

'Here to stay, here to flourish'. Lailey. 31 Jul 2003

'In search of greener pastures'. O'Toole. 11 Jul 2003 12:23

'Race-hate thugs run amok in PE Township'. Kwanobuhle. Tuesday 11 Sep 2001

'Fewer' human rights for refugees, say locals' 19 Oct 2001

'Africa's bursting bubble of resentment' March 12 1999

'Farmers sow the seeds of xenophobia'. February 16 1999



'Killer stalks African foreigners'. December 1998  
 'The locals don't want the competition'. September 14 1998  
 'Go home, foreigners' September 14 1998  
 'New bill allows for political asylum'. September 14 1998  
 'The major migrant networks'. September 14 1998  
 'Immigrants create jobs, not steal them'. September 14 1998  
 'Immigrants are creating work - not taking our jobs'. Carter and Haffajee. 11 Sep 1998  
 'Go back to your country' June 26 1998  
 'No 'immigrant' torrent, says report'. June 1998  
 'Foreigners love SA xenophobia movie'. July 31 1998  
 'Police in illegal strikes on refugees'. May 1998  
 'Human rights abuses still widespread'. March 20 1998  
 'Riot on eve of detention-camp probe'. December 12 1997  
 'Slave labour in Northern Province'. November 14 1997  
 'Africa's not crashing SA's gates'. October 1997  
 'An alien hour in Jo'burg'. August 1997  
 'Turning aliens into an asset'. May 30 1997  
 'A human flood is drowning Gauteng'. May 16 1997  
 'Asylum rush swamps government'. March 14 1997  
 'Deporting for cash'. February 7 1997  
 'Twilight zone where deportees wait'. February 1997  
 'Migration policy flaws being ironed out'. January 17 1997  
 'Immigrants must face SA's new 'Group Areas''. July 26 1996

‘Home Affairs frustrates would-be immigrants’. March 29 1996

‘Greedy people moving in for our fruits’. September 23 1994

‘Illegal immigrants: the danger of witch-hunts’. September 23 1994

‘The Invisible Fugitives For Whom Jo Burg Is Paradise’. 15 Jul 1994

## Appendix 9

### Ambiance, beer, bars and the *ndumba*

Ambiance, toi qui nous fait perdre la raison  
Ambiance, toi qui nous donne des frissons  
Et nous mène de joie en joie  
aux plaisirs et souvent aux pires folies.  
Quand je me sens tout fatigué,  
le cœur en paix mais l'amant en détresse  
Pour chasser tous ces soucis,  
il n'y a qu'une chose: l'ambiance.

*Ambiance* by Joseph Kabasele and African Jazz quoted in Biaya 1996: 330

The notion of *ambiance* has evolved with the music (Biaya 1996, Tchabwa 1996: 252-259). It refers to the atmosphere generated by the gathering of revellers and musicians in venues. The notion has come to have a more developed meaning for the Congolese. It also concerns the value attached to the ability and the status of those capable of generating an *ambiance*, the *ambianceurs* that stands out as particular. The performance in dance, clothing, bearing and language of fashionable men and women, whether musicians or not, that make up the repertoire of the *ambianceurs*. The bearing of this cultural development on the spread of the music is twofold. The high status accorded the urban sophisticated knowledgeable in and generative of the new urban fashions was closely associated with the development of the music. So the music and the musicians had the support and status of a more general social and cultural development. It meant there were more practical opportunities for musicians to perform very regularly as nightlife and bar life in Kinshasa and Brazzaville made the two cities amongst the hottest in Africa in the 1960s. This was reflected in ever increasing numbers of bands and nightclubs in the

two cities such that Franco reached the point where he put a ban on the creation of new bands in Kinshasa in 1973 as the head of the musicians union UMUZA when he counted 371 in existence (Stewart 2000: 197). After independence and the end of the Belgian 8 p.m curfew and restrictions on personal movement the *ambianceurs* took to the streets and stayed up until morning. They generated an atmosphere as much on particular streets and areas as in the nightclubs where the musicians reigned (Tchebwa 1996: 139, 328, 331; De Boeck 2004: 36-41). Second, this domestic cultural grounding has provided some of the self-confidence and stage presence that characterise Congolese performance and may help explain their willingness to take a risk on the road or to emigrate.

## Appendix 10. Nkisi – Magic and Charisma

*- There is also something that the fans say. That Congolese musicians have more magic or nkisi?*

**Wuta Mayi** - (Laughs.) No that's everywhere in Africa, that's part of our African traditions but I think all that comes after. If a team – say Manchester United – plays against an African team, even if they come with all the Marabout of Africa, they are not going to beat Manchester United because that's a question of the technique of football. That's a mark of experience. So its nothing to do with magic its intelligence first of all.

Even though Congolese musicians, at least those in Europe, tend to dismiss the significance of *nkisi* in their success they still recognise, as do fans, that there's a different force on the stage when you see Congolese bands compared with those from neighbouring countries. I attended a gig at which Madilu played in a big hotel in Tanzania. His band was mixed Congolese and Tanzanian. Two of the singers were Congolese. It was immediately apparent that they were Congolese, at least to me, even though they were dressed just like the rest of the band, who were Tanzanian.

*- When you see a Kenyan or Tanzanian band on the stage and then some Congolese you can see the difference, there's a difference in the force. In a*

*Tanzanian band you can see they are not Congolese even though they play just as well.*

**Wuta Mayi** - But exactly. Because the Congolese, they hold themselves, their *boulot* (work), in a way to impress the public. To amaze, imposing ourselves on the music. But you, you others play as if you are doing it for pleasure. (Cheltenham UK 06/03/04)

Despite this dismissal by Wuta Mayi amongst fans and musicians there is a constant rumour mill churning out new stories of witchcraft and rumours of conspiracies related to how musicians have achieved their success (*lupemba*) through witchcraft. This is the subject of White (2004) study. Here are some examples of such rumours from fieldnotes of a conversation with the Congolese leader of the band Bilenge Musica in Nairobi.

Lesasa claimed that Franco did not die of aids as everybody believes. He went on to say that Mobutu had Franco murdered by using slow acting poison that mimicked the symptoms of aids. Supposedly Mobutu did this because Franco refused to act as Mobutu's assassin, using the same method, against political opponents to whom Franco had easy access while he was in great demand in the mid to late 1980's.

When Mobutu made the same supposed demand of Tabu Ley, Tabu Ley went into exile in the USA for fear of the same fate befalling him. Lesasa made this claim with utmost seriousness.

To demonstrate how important magic is to musicians the death of P  p   Kall   of Empire Bakuba was added to the list of ‘deaths in suspicious circumstances’ of the stars. This time the story involved P  p   Kall   being buried alive. P  p   Kall   was said to have kept a room separate for his own private use in his own house into which he would go prior to a big trip and nobody was meant to disturb him for 3 days while he went into a deep meditation without a break for food. When he did not reappear after 2 days his worried wife went in to find him. Finding him apparently dead she got to work organising a funeral and the burial service. The story goes that he was nothing like dead and that he ended up being buried alive still in a state of deep meditation.

Another common and sinister story involves the sacrifice of band members for the success of the group. Whenever a band member is seen to be falling ill or there has been a serious illness of a band member in the process of a band becoming successful suspicion is aroused that the band member has been sacrificed through witchcraft (Interviews with musicians and Swinnock interviewed in Brighton, UK 10/08/04). White (2004: 183) describes forms of personal sacrifice designed to bring success, sacrifice of ones fertility, of a finger and the public suspicion in the case of M’pongo Love that her disability was the consequence of such sacrifice.<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>500</sup> See White (2004) for more references on the subject of success and witchcraft accusations in Congolese popular music and public life.

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## Internetography

### Access All Areas

The site of the British based music promoters Access all Areas that promote Congolese acts. <<http://www.accessallareas.info/soukous.html>>

### Afribeat

<[http://www.com/cont\\_kanda.html](http://www.com/cont_kanda.html)>

A British based website dedicated to African music. This page is their article on Kanda Bongo Man. < <http://www.afribeat.com/>>

### Africambiance

<<http://.com/forum/>>

A popular chat room for those interested in African music, especially Congolese.

A Chat room in which an involved debate has been conducted about all the sources that have gone into the evolution of an 'East African Sound' and whether such a thing exists that is not fundamentally influenced by the Congolese sound:

<<http://216.239.59.104/search?q=cache:M5mYGg17OBsJ:africambiance.com/forum/viewtopic.php%3Ft%3D993%26highlight%3Dlingala%2Brumba+Polygram+Nairobiandhl=enandct=clnkandcd=17andclient=safari>>

### Africa Centre

<<http://www.africacentre.org.uk/>>

The UK based Africa Centre

### Africa Confidential

One of the most concise summaries of African news monthly.

<<http://www.africa-confidential.com/>>

### Africa Online

One of the most professional search engines for Africa that has good entries on the music industry in East, Central and Southern Africa.

<<http://www.africaonline.com>>

### African Hip hop

<[www.africanhiphop.com](http://www.africanhiphop.com)>

African Hip Hop. 2006. African hip hop scene.

<[www.africanhiphop.com/tanup/dar\\_up](http://www.africanhiphop.com/tanup/dar_up)>

Kenya and Dar es Salaam Hip Hop Scene

### African Musicians Profiles

A London based website that provides biographies, many of them self penned, of Congolese musicians and a links page.

<<http://www.africanmusiciansprofiles.com/links.htm>>

#### African Music

Claims to be an encyclopaedia of African music.

<[http:// africanmusic.org/](http://africanmusic.org/)>

#### Africa No. 1

<http://www.africa1.com/>

One of the most powerful radio stations in Africa.

#### Africanstars

The website of the promotion company for the Tanzanian bands African Stars and African revolution.

[http://www. africanstars.net/](http://www.africanstars.net/)

#### Africasounds

A site to which those involved in the music industry in Europe connected to the African music scene contribute. The well informed Congolese music fanatic Martin Swinnock writes for this site, particularly good for reviews of recent releases and band news.

<[http://www. africasounds.com/](http://www.africasounds.com/)>

#### Africultures

The site of the Paris based magazine committed to African culture *Africultures*.

<<http://www.com/index.asp>>

#### afrik.com

Site with information on the Paris Club Scene for African Music.

<<http://www.afrik.com/musik/index.php>>

#### Afrique Echos

<[http://www.afriquechos.ch/article.php3?id\\_article=453](http://www.afriquechos.ch/article.php3?id_article=453)>

Magazine with a strong culture element. In this article the focus is Zaiko Langa Langa. In this site they provide an obituary for the famous artist 'Rossignol' in which the manager and presenter Mobhe Jhomos can be seen with him.

<[http://www.afriquechos.ch/article.php3?id\\_article=256](http://www.afriquechos.ch/article.php3?id_article=256)>

#### Afrocuba

A site dedicated to Cuban culture and its links with Africa.

<<http://afrocubaweb.com/>>

#### Afromix

French language site with discographies and stories on all major Congolese artists.

<<http://www.afromix.org/static/disco/artistes/index.fr.html>>

#### Afropop

<[www.afropop.org](http://www.afropop.org)>

The Afropop organisation has been at the forefront of in depth web based journalism linked to the academic community focusing on the music of Africa and the African Diaspora. Banning Eyre and George Collinet have conducted many interviews with

and produced many features on the musicians and cities mentioned in this study. See for instance:

Coplan, David 2005. Obituary for Brenda Fassie.

<[www.afropop.org/multi/feature/ID/374/Brenda+Fassie%2C+1964-2004](http://www.afropop.org/multi/feature/ID/374/Brenda+Fassie%2C+1964-2004)>

George Collinet 2004. 'Grandmaster Franco' <<http://afropop.org/multi/feature>>

'Koffi Olomide' <<http://afropop.org/multi/feature/ID/307>>

Simaro, the long time band leader of OK Jazz, interviewed by Banning Eyre.

<<http://www.afropop.org/multi/interview/ID/28/Lutumba%20Simaro,%202002>>

Wendo Kolosoy interviewed by Banning Eyre.

<<http://www.afropop.org/multi/interview/ID/27>>

Werra Son interviewed by Banning Eyre.

<<http://www.afropop.org/multi/interview/ID/26/Werra%20Son:%20Kinshasa,%202002>>

allafrica.com

<<http://allafrica.com/stories/200410280539.html>>

A popular African news search engine. See for instance an article on the 'Manhunt for members of Defao's band' in Zimbabwe.

<<http://allafrica.com/stories/200407210545.html>>

Aequatoria

<[http://www.aequatoria.be/archives\\_project/](http://www.aequatoria.be/archives_project/)>

BBC

The BBC has established a substantial music resource on Radio 3.

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/worldmusic/index.shtml>>

British Library Newspapers/ Collingwood.

<<http://www.bl.uk/collections/newspapers.html>>

The British Libraries newspaper archive at Collingwood.

Bolingo

<http://bolingo.org/>

A website dedicated to Congolese music. For the Congolese in Abidjan see:

[http://bolingo.org/audio/africa/congo/disco/LP/sacodis/dr\\_rhythm\\_sacodisc.htm](http://bolingo.org/audio/africa/congo/disco/LP/sacodis/dr_rhythm_sacodisc.htm)

Bongo Flava

This website features news about events and trends in the Tanzanian hip-hop music.

<http://www.bongoflava.com/>

Capital FM

The home page of the 98.4 FM radio station in Nairobi, with weekly pop music charts in

East Africa and other general information on the contemporary cultural scene in Nairobi.

<http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/home/index.asp>

#### Channel5

<<http://www.channel5.co.tz/profile.htm>>

A profile of one of the new private Tanzanian television broadcasters channel 5.

#### Chéri Samba.

<http://galerie-herrmann.com/arts/samba/index>

Artwork by the Congolese artist is displayed on this site.

#### CIA

<[www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sf](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sf)>

The Central Intelligence Agency provides useful country profiles.

#### Congo Boston

An expatriate Congolese site based in Boston for the expatriate community.

Interviews with visiting Congolese musicians.

<[www.congoboston.com](http://www.congoboston.com)>

#### Congonline

<<http://www.congonline.com/Musiciens/Interview/JBMpiana.htm>>

A web based Congolese news service with a strong music focus. Here is an interview with J.B.Mpiana.

#### Congo 2000

A Congolese run African search engine based in Canada with Congolese history, music and government information.

<<http://www.congo2000.com/index.php>>

#### Congo Pages

A site dedicated to Congolese arts.

<http://www.congo-pages.org/welcome.htm>

#### Congo Post

A Congo focused news site.

<<http://www.congopost.com/>>

#### Congo Vision

A Congo focused news site. This is an article on Madilu System.

<http://www.congovision.com/music6.html>

#### Darhotwire

Darhotwire is a website on which the music scene in Dar es Salaam is kept up to date.

<<http://www.darhotwire.com/v2/go/burudani/bongodansi.html>>

For an example of their profile of the fourth generation Congolese star based in Tanzania Ndanda 'Kosovo' see:

<<http://darhotwire.com/v2/go/burudani/dansi/ndanda/mahojiano/index.html>>

### Digital Congo

A Kinshasa based website popular with Congolese expatriates for their politics, sports and music scenes.

<<http://www.digitalcongo.net/fullstory.php?id=45083>>

This is an example of their music journalism on the subject of the Wenge generation.

<<http://www.digitalcongo.net/fullstory.php?id=40581>>

### District Six

District Six museum website.

<[www.districtsix.co.za](http://www.districtsix.co.za)>

### djembe/ Flemming Harrev

< [http://www.djembe.dk/sam/\\_private/sam/disco00.htm](http://www.djembe.dk/sam/_private/sam/disco00.htm)>

### Echarry

Private enthusiasts African music site.

<<http://echarry.web.wesleyan.edu/>>

### Endo

A private website dedicated to African music with good discographies of Eastern and Central African bands by enthusiast T. Endo.

<<http://biochem.chem.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~endo/africa.html>>

### Ethnologue

<<http://www.ethnologue.com/home.asp>>

Ethnologue provides information on world languages and population groups. For instance see Tanzania at:

<[http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_country.asp?name=Tanzania](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=Tanzania)>

Flemming Harrev's web page and loving work on the archive of Sam Mangwana's discography and biography. The page is on the site of the Nordic online musical resource and connected to the radio station 'radiomultikulti'.

<<http://www.djembe.dk/djembe.html>>

### Franco

A fine site dedicated to Congolese musicians especially OK Jazz.

<<http://people.zeelandnet.nl/rufus/>>

### Frank Bessem

Frank Bessem's website of artist and band biographies. This page is for Kékéle.

<[http://www.geocities.com/MotorCity/Speedway/4939/frames/art\\_kekele.html](http://www.geocities.com/MotorCity/Speedway/4939/frames/art_kekele.html)>

### froots

British based magazine 'froots' link to African music.

<<http://www.frootsmag.com/content/issue/netroot/#african>>

### Grove Music Dictionary

This is the website of the Grove Dictionary of Music and the contribution on Congo.  
<<http://www.grovemusic.com/shared/views/article.html?section=music.53350.3.4.2#m>> See the following site for their biography of Jean Bosco Mwenda.  
<[http://www.grovemusic.com/shared/views/article.html?from=searchandsession\\_search\\_id=911276901andhitnum=4andsection=music.48960](http://www.grovemusic.com/shared/views/article.html?from=searchandsession_search_id=911276901andhitnum=4andsection=music.48960)>

#### Harmattan

One of the most influential French language publishers on Africa.  
<<http://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp>>

#### IPP East African Media

The ipp media organisation cover East Africa. This piece is on the Tanzanian band African Stars.  
<<http://ipp.co.tz/ipp/raha/2004/07/04/14923.html>>

#### IRIN

One of the most informative sites for up to date African news from the UN.  
<[www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Africa](http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Africa)>

#### Jeune Afrique.

The link for the culture focused *Jeune Afrique*.  
<<http://www.lecto.com/zzjeuneafrique.html>>

#### Journal of African Music

<<http://ietpd1.sowi.uni-mainz.de/~ntama/>>  
Journal of African Music. For texts of Remmy Ongala songs see:  
<<http://ietpd1.sowi.uni-mainz.de/~ntama/articles/remmy/remmytext.html>>

#### Kenya Broadcasting Company.

A profile of the Kenya Broadcasting Company.  
<<http://www.kbc.co.ke/profile.asp>>

#### Kenyapage

<http://kenyapage.net/music/>  
A good Kenya based website that provides biographies of Congolese artists. See for instance:<<http://kenyapage.net/franco/>>  
Those in Kenya are also well covered.

#### Kongo Net.

A web based Congolese news and culture service with a strong archive on Congolese musicians.  
<<http://www.ne-kongo.net/>>

#### Kongoi Promoters.

<http://www.kongoi.com/index.php>  
Oslo based music promoters for the Tanzanian Kilimanjaro Band



#### Language and Popular Culture in Africa.

'The main aim of LPCA is to document and further the study of expressions of popular language and culture in Africa.' Maintained by Johannes Fabian and Vincent de Rooij of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Amsterdam. [KF] The focus is primarily on Swahili.

<http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/lpca/>

#### Leopardman

'Leopardman' produces musical country profiles and artist biographies. Here is an example for P  p   Kall  .

<http://www.leopardmannen.no/k/kalle.pepe.asp?lang=gb>

#### Mail and Guardian

The liberal English language South African newspaper the Mail and Guardian with a good search engine for old stories in their archives.

<http://www.mg.co.za/>

#### Matsuli

African Music Blog site with links to video clips and a chat room.

<http://matsuli.blogspot.com/>

#### Music encyclopaedia

Music encyclopaedia of popular music. 2006

<http://www.musicweb.uk.net/encyclopaedia/m/M279.HTM>

#### Musikmeet

A website dedicated to the music scene in Dar es Salaam.

<http://www.musikmuseet.se/mmm/africa/dar.html>

#### Music Org.

South African music site.

<http://www.music.org.za/>

#### Muzikifan

<http://www.muzikifan.com/>

Music reviews and views of long time enthusiast Alistair Johnston, see in particular the pages on 'Congolese Bands in East Africa' by Paul Johnston.

[www.muzifan.com/shika](http://www.muzifan.com/shika)

and the 'Music of Tanzania and Kenya'.

<http://www.muzikifan.com/kenya.html?lang=gb>

#### Malm, Krister

<http://www.musikmuseet.se/mmm/africa/nairobi.html>

Malm, Krister. 2005. 'Rap, Ragga and Reggae in Kenya'

on Dar es Salaam: [www.musikmeet.se/mmm/africa/dar](http://www.musikmeet.se/mmm/africa/dar)

#### Muana, Tshala

<<http://www.tshalamuana.fr.st/>>

#### Natari

One of the best-known sources of Congolese music of the Internet.

<<http://www.natari.com/zaire.htm>>

#### Nation Newspaper

<<http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/Supplements/lifestyle/>>

The website of the Kenyan English language Newspaper the Daily Nation. The Kenyan Congolese music fan writes for this paper. See for instance:

<[http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/19012002/News/Sat\\_Review14.html](http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/19012002/News/Sat_Review14.html)>

And his remembrance piece for Franco.

<<http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/11102003/News/REVIEW2.html>>

#### Panafrican Allstars

A site retailing Congolese music DVD's.

<<http://www.panafricanallstars.com/dvd/dvd3.asp>>

#### Paterson, Doug

<<http://members.aol.com/dpaterson/eamusic.htm>>

Doug Paterson's extensive East African music site. See the link to Graebner, Werner 2004. 'Mlimani Park' <[www.members.aol.com/dpaterson/mlimani](http://www.members.aol.com/dpaterson/mlimani)>

#### Public Radio International

Public Radio broadcast by Suzanne Marmion on the role of popular dance music in the provision of election songs in the 2006 elections for Kabila and previously by OK Jazz for Mobutu. The classic *Candidat Na Biso* is included in the programme.  
<http://www.theworld.org/?q=node/3384>

#### Radio Okapi

The website of the radio station set up by the international donors in Kinshasa.

<<http://www.radiookapi.net/>>

#### Smithsonian Institute

<[smithsonianglobalsound.org/feature\\_01G.aspx](http://smithsonianglobalsound.org/feature_01G.aspx)>

Smithsonian. 2005. A biographical summary based on Kubik's works.

#### Societe Nationale des Chemins de Fer du Congo

National railway company. Based in Lubumbashi.

<http://www.ic-lubum.cd/../../sncc/texte/sncchome.htm>

#### South African History.

<<http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/mainframe.htm>>

For their pages on Brenda Fassie go to:

<[www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/fassie-b.htm](http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/fassie-b.htm) for Fassie's discography>

#### South African Migration Project (SAMP)

South African Migration Project (SAMP) website on xenophobia and the link to press coverage of the police dog attack on migrants.

[<queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources/xenophobia/>](http://queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources/xenophobia/)

[<www.queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources/xenophobia/press/dogattack/page1.htm>](http://www.queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources/xenophobia/press/dogattack/page1.htm)

#### South African Government Statistical website.

[<statsa.gov.za/>](http://statsa.gov.za/)

[<statsa.gov.za/census01/htm>](http://statsa.gov.za/census01/htm)

South African Census Website.

[<www.statssa.gov.za/census01/html/C2001deprivation.asp>](http://www.statssa.gov.za/census01/html/C2001deprivation.asp)

The link to the definitions of multiple deprivation used on the site.

#### Stanford University - DRC

[<http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/zaire.html>](http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/zaire.html)

A comprehensive list of websites associated with the DRC

#### Sterns

[<http://www.sternsmusic.com/>](http://www.sternsmusic.com/)

This is the website for the London based music retailers for what is probably the most extensive back catalogue, collection of discographies and useful search facilities for African music with a listening facility for clips from that catalogue.

#### Stroeken, Koen 2005

'This is not a haircut. Neoliberalism and revolt in Kiswahili rap' in *Image and Narrative* May 2005.

[<http://www.imageandnarrative.be/worldmusicb\\_advertising/koenstroeken.htm>](http://www.imageandnarrative.be/worldmusicb_advertising/koenstroeken.htm)

#### Tanzanian Government

[<http://www.tanzania.go.tz/>](http://www.tanzania.go.tz/)

#### Thorpe, Julian

[<www.lifesci.sussex.ac.uk/home/Julian\\_Thorpe/sax15>](http://www.lifesci.sussex.ac.uk/home/Julian_Thorpe/sax15)

Thorpe, Julian. 1998. 'Music and Musicians in Eastern and Central Africa'.

#### United Nations of Hip hop

[<http://www.unitednationsofhiphop.com/>](http://www.unitednationsofhiphop.com/)

African Hip Hop Site

#### United Nations

[<http://esa.un.org/unup/index>](http://esa.un.org/unup/index)

#### University of the Witwatersrand. Forced Migration Studies Programme

Publishes preliminary findings on migration and displacement in Africa.

[<http://www.migration.wits.ac.za/FMSPWP.html>](http://www.migration.wits.ac.za/FMSPWP.html)

#### Wemba, Papa

<[http://www.kbl69.dial.pipex.com/politics\\_of\\_mobutu.html](http://www.kbl69.dial.pipex.com/politics_of_mobutu.html)>

A site dedicated to Papa Wemba. On this page his rise to fame and his adjustments to the demands of Mobutu and the authenticity policy in the late 1970s are detailed ('Playing with Politics'). Papa Wemba and Congolese dance:

<<http://www.kbl69.dial.pipex.com/dances.html>>

For a short Papa Wemba focused history of Congolese Dance:

See examples of Papa Wemba dancers *fioti fioti* practising their moves:

<<http://fioti.free.fr/index01.html>>

Werra Son

<<http://werrason.free.fr/news.php>>

Werra Son's website. See the video clip for his album Operation Dragon on You Tube. Other Congolese stars have clips on You Tube as well.

< <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kThYwF4ryCM>>

This link is to the show Werra Son did during my research in Kinshasa when he launched the new dance Kisanola, changed sponsors to Primus and appeared on stage with his hero Tabu Ley. This is the dance that can be seen in the DVD of the 4 generations of dance. I may be glimpsed at the back of the stage with my brother.

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZm9dCAHtMY&mode=related&search=>>

World Bank.

<<http://devdata.worldbank.org>>

For Country specific data go to:

<<http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPProfile.asp?SelectedCountry=ZAFandCCODE=ZAFandCNAME=South%2BAfricaandPTYPE=CP>>

World Music Central

<<http://www.worldmusiccentral.org/>>

News and purchasing site with a strong African connection.

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## Discography

All dates, labels and catalogue numbers are taken from the CD releases at the time of writing rather than the original dates of releases.

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## CD Notes.

The songs on these CD span the period of the four generations from Wendo to Wenge. I have included examples of Swahili Rumba from East Africa to illustrate the parallel developments and contemporary songs from South Africa by way of contrast. Recording details are from the best evidence available to me and are followed by albums on which they are re-released in brackets.

### CD 1

1. **Marie-Louise** (Wendo Kolosoy). Lingala Rumba. 1948. Leopoldville: Ngoma. (Pamap 101)

This love song for Marie-Louise is a perfect representative of the music of the first generation of modern Congolese music. The song and the man stand as symbols for the Congolese of this generation. The guitarist Henri Bowane performing here was the prime mover amongst the musicians of the first generation in the studio and in his nightclub.

2. **Mbube** (Solomon Linda's Original Evening Birds). 1939. Johannesburg: Gallo. (Gallo CDZAC 77)

This familiar song was recorded long before the first studio was set up in Leopoldville and six years after the Gallo studio started functioning. The *marabi* and American gospel influenced piano underpins a deeply South African Zulu choral style. This style, generally known as *isicathimaya*, also came to be referred to as a Mbube as a consequence of the huge popularity of this song, one of the biggest ever sellers for Gallo for many years after its first release. It was also covered without royalties by amongst others Disney for the Lion King. The song and the accompaniment gives an idea of the different direction in which South African popular music was headed, both in the use of the piano and the mix of indigenous and North American rather than South American or Caribbean influences.

3. **Chaupele Mpenzi** – ‘I love Chaupele’ by Ally Sykes and the Dar-es-Salaam Swingers. Swahili Rumba. 1950. Dar-es-Salaam. Hugh Tracey. 2’57. (SWP0310)

This Tanganyikan love song has been included to show how the Latin influence arrived in East Africa via the same sort of records the Congolese listened to, evident in the clave 3:2 rhythm that underpins the music. Ally Sykes remained an important part of the East African music scene for many years through his association with the promoter Peter Colmore who went on to promote Katangan musicians of the first generation in the region. The strength of the horn section and the South African influenced vocal style are also interesting. Ally Sykes father was Zulu and the skills musicians acquired in military brass bands in many colonies found their way into dance bands.

4. **Tokanisa Tata Ngoma** ‘Let us Remember Tata Ngoma’ by Léon Bukasa. Lingala Rumba 1953. Leopoldville Ngoma. (Pamap 101)

This song is an obituary for the Greek businessman Nico Jérónimidis who set up the first studio, Ngoma, in Leopoldville. Léon Bukasa moved from Likasi, not far from

Elizabethville, to Leopoldville in 1948 and started to work in the Ngoma house band under Henri Bowane.

5. **Ekoko Bata** – ‘Not one step without Bata’ by Camille Mokoko. Lingala Rumba. Leopoldville 1954. Ngoma. (Pamap 101)

Sponsorship has never been far from the minds of Congolese musicians. The breweries for Primus and Skol now provide the most important sponsorship but since the beginning musicians have composed songs for sponsors, in this song for Bata shoes. ‘We can walk everywhere, but we should not forget to wear our Bata shoes’ (Gretz 1996: 18).

6. **Bibi Yangu** – ‘Madame Yangu’ by Léon Bukasa. Swahili Rumba. Leopoldville Ngoma. (Pamap 101) c.1955

Here Bukasa uses Swahili, rare in recordings made in Leopoldville, to sing a love song for his wife. The influence from Elizabethville of South Africa can be heard in the horn arrangement. In both his songs the varied indigenous, Latin and West Coast guitar influences can also be heard as well here as the South Eastern Congolese sound that gradually disappeared from the music of the capital.

7. **Marie-Louise** (Wendo) Lingala Cha cha 1958 Leopoldville Ngoma. (Pamap 101)

This song is included to show how far the recording techniques, arrangements and musicianship had come since 1948. The shift from rumba to cha cha cha for the re-recording of the song reflected a the new fashion of the time and the continuing influence from Latin America. These developments marked the shift from first to second generations represented by Joseph Kabesele’s band African Jazz.

8. **Sinners Are Welcome** (The Manhattan Brothers). English Swing Gospel. 1959 Johannesburg: Gallo. (Gallo CDZAC77).

9. **Tula Ndivile** ‘Keep quiet, I’ve heard you’ (Miriam Makeba with the Manhattan brothers) Xhosa Swing Jazz. 1954. Johannesburg: Gallo. (Gallo CDZAC77).

The Manhattan Brothers started performing in 1936 and established their relationship with Gallo before the war. During the 1950s their fame reached its high point and they toured Southern Africa relentlessly, their travels even taking them as far as Elizabethville and Leopoldville. Miriam Makeba began her career singing with them before she went into exile in the USA and began her international career. Her passport was revoked in 1960 for speaking out to the American press and the UN after the Sharpeville massacre. She was hounded from the USA by the CIA in 1969 for her association with the Black Power movement and moved to Guinea under the patronage of Sekou Touré. From the beginning studio recordings involved white session musicians as well as the cream of the black swing dance bands most notably Kippie Moeketsi on clarinet with his Kwela inflections and General Duze on guitar. They sang in South African languages but as they show here they were also comfortable in English, in the same way Sam Mangwana was in Spanish. As their name suggests they were also heavily influenced by North American music

especially black swing and gospel music like many other South African dance bands. The contrast with Central African developments are striking.

**10. Scullery Department** (Kippie Moeketsi & the Jazz Epistles).

**11. Cosmic Ray** (Trad./ Jazz Epistles). 1959. Empire Music. (BMG BM830)

These two tunes represent the culmination and sad end of the premiere group of South African jazz history under apartheid. The Jazz Epistles contained musicians subsequently driven by the pressures of apartheid into exile and international fame – Hugh Masekela, Dollar Brand (later Abdullah Ibrahim), Jonas Gangwa and Kippie Moeketsi. The album they recorded in 1959 that represented the work they had done soaking up the influence of American bebop and their South African heritage took their music in a direction away from the dance floor. That said in the second piece their familiarity with the music of the *kwela* pennywhistle craze of the time points in the direction of the sax jive and *mbaqanga* to come. All the musicians saw this album and short lived band as a critical personal and collaborative point in their creative musical lives before the jazz venues were closed and the place of their meeting, Sophiatown, was destroyed by the regime.

**12. Kelya** (Tabu Ley & African Jazz). Lingala rumba. 1959. Leopoldville: African Jazz. (Syllart 6129042)

Tabu Ley joined African Jazz in 1959 five years after the band formed under the patronage of the Benetars in the Opika studio and began their reign over Congolese music and created the sound of the second generation. The voice of Kabesele, the new electric lead guitar work of Tino Baroza and Dr. Nico and the Southern African horn influence of the Rhodesian Isaac Musekiwa recruited from Elizabethville coalesced into a sound that provided the basis of what was to follow for over twenty years long after the band folded. Tabu Ley grew up with and carefully learnt this sound and eventually inherited leadership of the African Jazz ‘school’.

**13. Indépendance Cha Cha Cha** (Roger Iziedi & African Jazz). Lingala Cha Cha. 1960. Bruxelles: African Jazz label. (Syllart 6129042)

This is the song that helped African Jazz become famous all over Africa as the band captured the spirit of the time. Recording in Bruxelles gave Kabesele access to a superior quality of multi-tracked recording and a means to make contacts directly with record companies for licensing deals in Africa, most importantly the Belgian company Fonior. It was released back home on the record label Kabesele created for his own distribution. The song included a roll call of all the most important politicians involved in the negotiations. A similar song by the band called *Table Ronde* was recorded at the same time.

**14. Cuba Chacha** ( Salum Abdallah & Cuban Marimba) Swahili Cha Cha. Mombasa: Mzuri. c. 1962. (dizim 4701-2)

Salum Abdullah’s name, combined with ‘Cuban’ and ‘Marimba’, indicates the three strains of *taarab*, Latin and indigenous *ngoma* rhythms that came together by the mid 1950s in his music. Abdullah was at the forefront of East African dance music when the country achieved independence in 1962. Without recording facilities or record labels at home the band travelled to Mombasa to record on an Indian owned label (Assanand & Sons Ltd.) called Mzuri. In this song the band revel in their version of

the most popular Latin form of the time. In other songs the rhythms are closer to indigenous *ngoma*, give praise to TANU and 'Mwalimu' and attack the continued occupation of Mozambique and Rhodesia by racists. Tanzanian bands remained without the recording facilities and record labels available to the Congolese but this song indicates how they were heading in a similar direction in this period.

15. **Tokumisa Congo** (Les Bantous de la Capitale). Lingala Rumba. 1964.

Leopoldville: Esengo. (Syllart 6129042)

Les Bantous were the band that formed in 1959 at the dawn of independence in Brazzaville, drawing many of the finest musicians back home from Leopoldville to make a band of their own. By 1964 the band was at the height of its powers touring the continent relentlessly, especially the Lomé corridor, and providing a sound that sat in neither the OK Jazz or African Jazz schools. The striking level of improvisation that can be heard here comes from two of the most famous names amongst Congolese horn players Jean Serge Essous on clarinet and Nino Malapet on sax. Essous started out playing unison lines with Franco in 1956 in OK Jazz before moving back to Brazzaville to start the new band. 'Gerry', 'Mascott' and 'Mermans' provided the guitar work by the time of this recording while 'Kosmos', Pablito, Edo Ganga and Célestin Kouka rounded out the vocals.

16. **Paquita**. (African Fiesta – Dr. Nico & Tabu Ley) Rumba Spanish/Lingala 1965. (Syllart 6129042)

Choosing a representative song from the huge back catalogue Tabu Ley has created is difficult. This one dates from a period when Tabu Ley had split from African Jazz with the guitarist Dr. Nico and before their split in 1967. Sam Mangwana came and went as part of the band and was working in Brazzaville at the time of this recording. The song is mainly in Spanish, usually Mangwana's forté. As such it is firmly in the African Jazz tradition of interpreting Latin music but with the difference created by the famous guitar work of Dr. Nico and his use of the pick rather than the thumb and forefinger Franco came to favour. In the 1970s Tabu Ley's music began to incorporate more influences from Zaire, America and Europe.

17. **Nakomitunaka**. 'I ask myself'. (Verckys & Le Vévé.) 1972. Rumba Lingala. Kinshasa: Vévé. (Sonodisc CD36599)

Verckys's classic of the era of *authenticité* was released on his label Vévé. He created the nursery that nurtured the talent of the majors stars of the young generation of his time – Lipua Lipua, Bella Bella, Kamalé, Kiam, the Trio Madjesi and, the most long lasting and influential of the group, Pépé Kallé's Empire Bakuba as well as his own band. Verckys played in the tradition of the second generation. In Nakomitunaka Verckys challenges the racism in the Christianity he experienced.

I ask myself,  
My God, I ask myself,  
Black skin, where does it come from?  
Our ancestor, who was he?  
Jesus, Son of God, was a white man.  
Adam and Eve were whites.  
Why then, oh my God?

In God's book we see,  
 All the angels: their images are only white,  
 All the saints: their images are only white,  
 But the Devil, his image is black.  
 This injustice, where does it come from, oh mama?  
 (Stewart 2000: 173)

18. **Azda.** (Franco & OK Jazz) Lingala Rumba. 1973. Kinshasa: Edition Populaires 360 053. (Manteca MANTCD013)

By 1973 the second generation had settled into their stride moving deeper into Congolese influences as President Mobutu had initiated his *authenticité* policies and adopted OK Jazz as his most favoured band. His favouring of Franco over Tabu Ley may have had as much to do with Franco's indigenous musical orientation as it did the suspicions Mobutu had about Tabu Ley's political and ethnic allegiance. This relationship with Mobutu did not stop Franco looking for sponsorship from business. In this song Franco sings for the distributors of VW cars in Zaire - Automobiles Zaireois Distribution Agence (AZDA) – advising people to order every variety of VW in every region of the country from AZDA. He displays the guitar technique mentioned and the growing size of his orchestras choral and horn sections can be heard. This is helped by the ever improving quality of multi-track recording technology.

19. SA **Tsotsi** 'Thief' (Boyoyo Boys) 1975. Mbaqanga. Gallo. (Gallo CDZAC 61). Victor Zulu (Lead Vocal). 'Tsotsi, Hey. Go Back Home'.

By the mid 1960s township jive, or that other catch all term *mbaqanga*, was firmly established and in the very capable hands of the Boyoyo boys and their competitors, the groaner Mahlathini and the Mahotella queens and his killer band made up of session musicians in the Makhole Tsohle Band. The kwela influenced sax jives of the 1960s, which were part of the idioms early development, disappeared on songs like this one from 1975. The strong jazz influence of the 1940s has given way to more specifically South African fusions using the acoustic possibilities of the electric guitars and bass. That influence was next to return in soul music.

## CD 2

1. **Ngeli Ngeli.** (Zaiko Langa Langa) 1976. Ghana. (RETRO5CD)

On this track the basic the sound of the founding band of the third generation can be heard in their youth. Although the 6/8 rhythm that starts the piece is not typical, the band breaks into the sebene with the modified clave 3:2 pattern that underpinned most Congolese music. The contrast with the sound of the second generation bands OK Jazz, Afrisa and Les Bantous is still striking. The absence of the horn section puts the focus on the vocals and guitars. The band recorded this track in Ghana in 1976 during a six month residency at the Caprice club in Accra, six years after they formed, at a time when references to the MPR you can hear were unsurprising. The album on which this appeared 'Zaire-Ghana' was produced by a founder of the first generation Henri Bowane who had settled in Ghana at this time after leaving the management of one of the most important bands for the spread of Congolese music

in West Africa – Ry-Co Jazz – while on tour there. Zaiko is the band that provided the nursery for Papa Wemba and Viva La Musica, General Defao and the Choc Stars, Bozi Boziana and Anti-Choc, Manuaku Waku and Grand Zaiko Wa Wa, Evoloko ‘Joker’ and the Langa Langa Stars and the song writing of Koffi Olomide. Each of these bands themselves gave birth to others, Viva la Musica to ‘King Kester’ Emeneya Mubiala’s Victoria Eleison for instance.

2. **Chama Cha Mapinduzi.** (Mose Se 'Fan Fan' Orchestra Makassy) 1979.

Swahili Rumba. Tanzania. Radio Tanzania.

It was not only bands based in the Congo that were making songs for their leaders. In 1978 in Tanzania an ex OK Jazz guitarist Mose Se ‘Fan Fan’ left Kinshasa and joined one of the most successful of the expatriate Congolese groups in East Africa, Orchestra Makassy, and performed on a song that probably endeared them with the ruling party, the CCM. It was recorded in the only studio in Dar-es-Salaam run by the state owned and controlled national radio station. Using Swahili meant Congolese bands avoided being excluded by the Swahili language policy on the radio. Makassy also had a native Swahili speaker as its leader - ‘Mzee’ Makassy – who had first moved East to Uganda in 1967. Tshimanga Assossa, one time singer for the widely travelled 1970s Kinshasa band Kamalé and Remmy Ongala later of Super Matimila, also sang for them at times and both grew up with Swahili in Southern and Eastern Congo respectively.

3. **Tchimurenga Zimbabwe.** (Sam Mangwana) 1979 Paris: Sam Records.

SAM002 (Re-released on Sterns STCD3011)

This song was recorded in Paris as part of the sessions in Nigeria and Paris that launched Mangwana’s international career independent of *les grands patrons* Franco and Tabu Ley after he left Kinshasa and formed the African All Stars in Abidjan with the support of the promoter Badmos. It is not one of the most famous songs from those sessions. The love songs Maria Tebbo, Georgette Eckins were and are better known as Mangwana mixed in English, French and made shorter more poppy tracks for his new market. Affaire Disco and Waka Waka were big hits in Nigeria. This song, like Bana na Cameroun, Moçambique Oyé, Zimbabwe my love, Libedade e Terra Minha Angola are good examples of Mangwana making an effort to appeal to particular markets. Mangwana’s parents are Angolan though he was brought up in Kinshasa.

4. **Fabrice.** (Franco & OK Jazz) 1982. Lingala. Kinshasa: Edipop. POP06

(Ngoyarto NGO107 & 107).

By the mid 1970s Franco appeared as unmovable from his position of musical dominance as his main patron, Mobutu, was from political dominance, despite the rise of the third generation. Unlike Mobutu, Franco and OK Jazz continued to deliver the goods. Here Franco sings for Fabrice, a Brussels tailor who used to outfit the band (Ewens 1994: 238). This was a period of great creativity just before the seminal album *Coopération* with Sam Mangwana who returned to Kinshasa for the recording. The promoters Cuxac and Badmos made sure of high sales in West Africa while Polygram distributed and marketed to East Africa bringing in sales of

between 30 and 100 thousand per album for the stream of OK Jazz releases. It was Cuxac who initiated the collaboration.

5. **Yembele**. 'Confusion and strife'. (Samba Mapangala & Orchestre Virunga) 1984. Lingala Rumba. Nairobi: Serengeti. (Earthworks CDEWV16).

In East Africa the expatriate Congolese continued to ride high in Nairobi, buoyed by the steady flow of new hits and visiting stars from Kinshasa. Among them Samba Mapangala and his band (named after the Virunga volcano) provided local audiences with some of the finest Lingala and Shwahili rumba to be heard in the early 1980s. The song concerns the strife between Mapangala and a musician friend over money caused by a woman. Mapangala is not from Eastern Congo like most of the expatriates but from Matadi in the far West. In this song Mapangala uses Lingala, something the Congolese in Tanzania could use less as the language policy on the radio was far tighter there than in Kenya. Mapangala, like other Congolese musicians, played for Kanu, the last time during elections in 1992, with P  p   Kall   in a tour of Nyanza and Western provinces (Daily Nation 28/01/01).

6. **SA Gumboot** (Blanket Mkhize, Makhosonke Nyide And Zisebenzele Mbhele) 1996 Gumboot Guitar. Recorded by Janet Topp Fargion & Veit Erlmann: Highflats Kwazulu Natal. (Topic TSCD923)
7. **SA Wayi Thathaphi** (Shiyani Ngcobo) 2004. Recorded by Ben Mandelson Durban: Sheer Sound. (SLCD063)
8. **SA Nginenkinga** (Phuzekhemisi) 2001. Johannesburg: Gallo (CDGMP40863)

In the 1980s the South African versions of soul music rocked the township youth. Abroad expatriate jazzers carried on their experimentation. Alongside it in the hostels of the migrant workers a tradition carried on that predated the apartheid legislation and survived its demise. It is now popular on television as the staple of the *Ezodumo* show ('it shall sound'). These recordings chart the movement of Zulu *maskanda* guitar playing from town, to mine and hostel and now onto television. It started out as the work of rural lone troubadours attracted by the guitar in the early twentieth century. It was then used to support the formalised gumboot dancing of mineworkers and hostel dwellers migrating between country and town with their music in the 1930s. This is the music that Blanket Mkhizwe's band still play and can be heard on track 6. It was music that was encouraged under apartheid ideology as a music that would somehow tie workers to their rural roots. This recording is a long way from the studios of Kinshasa or Brenda Fassie's pop hit of the 1980s *Weekend Special*. The addition of concertina and violin provided the classic shebeen, concert party and minstrel trio. In the second recording by the virtuoso guitarist Ngcobo an electric bass has been added to the line up. Since the advent of television in the 1970s and especially since 1994 *maskanda* musicians have added drums and these studio recordings are not so far from the acoustic space of South African 'pop'. Phuzekhemisi is a regular on *Ezodumo* and is the best known of the *maskanda* stars spreading the music well beyond the hostel dweller. This music, despite its adaptation of the studio, is not caught up in the ever-changing fashions of South African 'pop' music. It is still however highly popular and represents a crucial strain in the cultural life of the new and old nation that cannot be dismissed. It has been included to illustrate the diversity of South African music whether urban or 'rurban'.

9. **Nakei Nairobi** (Mbilia Bel with Tabu Ley's Afrisa International) 1986. Swahili. Sylart. (SYL 203)

This song was a huge hit for Mbilia Bel in Kenya after she joined Tabu Ley and his band and started touring East Africa. The song is obviously designed to endear the singer with a Kenyan audience with the repeated mention of Nairobi and Mombassa not to mention the government. At the time of the song's release the *harambee* movement was in full swing and this is the other reference that is central to the song. Musically the song suits Mbilia Bel's voice perfectly and the long slower introductory passage is quite distinctive. This was the time Tshala Muana was also beginning to make a big impact in East Africa.

10. **Liza**. (Kanda Bongo Man) 1987. Soukous. Paris: Globestyle CDORBOO5 and Nascente NSCD 089

The Paris scene took off for Congolese musicians in the 1980s with the help of entrepreneurs like Ouattara Moumouni who first recorded Kanda there in 1981. It was not until the mid 1980s that Kanda achieved international recognition, which extended to Britain with the help of British label Hannibal. Kanda went on to record the same songs again on numerous occasions – most recently on his latest releases on the South African label Gallo. In this version the elite of the Paris scene – Dibo Dibala and Rigo Star on guitars, Pablo Lubadika on bass and Ty-Jan on drums – brought the Paris sound of the era to its zenith, just before the advent of synthesisers and drum machines became so important. This is the sound that filled the dance floors to the call of *kwassa kwassa*. This is the Paris sound of the third generation with which Kanda became identified in Africa. By moving immediately to the high-octane sebene section any worries about understanding the lyrics in the love song for Liza disappear amongst Kanda's famous dance moves. Empire Bakuba fronted the Kinshasa based version of this sound.

11. **Makumbele**. (Orchestra Maquis Original.) 1987. Swahili. Tanzania: RT. ('Muziki wa Dansi' Africassette AC9403)

'Makumbele I have never harmed you in any way, yet you made me suffer a lot, my love, father of my children'. Congolese expatriate band Orchestra Maquis had to rely on the one track studio in Radio Tanzania for all their recordings like all bands based in Dar-es-Salaam and by 1987 the contrast in the recording quality with their compatriots in Paris or Kinshasa is considerable. Nonetheless the quality of compositions, size of bands and skills are comparable even if the absence of multi-tracking and new instruments has its audible consequences.

### CD 3

1. **SOS Maya**. (Zaiko Langa Langa Nkolo Mboka) 1989. Lingala. Kinshasa:

This was the year the most serious split of many that afflicted the Zaiko clan occurred. The faction that proved the most enduring was the one headed here by Nyoka Longo. Zaiko had come a long way since its formation in 1969, as had many of its progeny, most notably Papa Wemba. Here a paired down Zaiko made the most of the remaining member's skills to compete with their new rival Zaiko Langa Langa Familia Dei led by singer Bimi Ombale, one of the original band's founders. Their



musical formulas, song structures, vocal roles and large repertoire of dances were well established by this time and both bands were able to re-group and deliver the goods. These were conventions they passed on to the next generation to develop further.

2. **Mulolo.** (J.B. Mpiana & Wenge Musica) 1989. Ndombolo Lingala. Kinshasa: Editions Bisel. (natari NACD9401)

This song was the title track of Wenge Musica's first album and marked the birth of the fourth generation. The sound is still close to that of the third generation. The band still start the songs with slower introductory passages but some of the elements that came to distinguish their music can be heard – the prominent role of the singers and *atalaku*, and the use of synthesisers. At this stage they lack the quality of recording facilities and production values of their Parisian compatriots, or of Zaiko who could afford to record in Paris and this can be heard in the lower mastering volume. They made up for this with youthful enthusiasm on stage and inventiveness for new dance fashions, culminating in the dance by which the generation are known *ndomobolo*. This style is the one that was carried once again to East Africa by Congolese musicians, to Nairobi with Rumba Japan and Bilenge Musica and to Tanzania with Diamond Sounds, Stono Musica and FM Academia only to be taken up by Tanzanian bands like African Stars and Tanzania one Theatre.

3. SA. **Black President.** (Brenda Fassie) 1990. English. CCP/EMI (EMI 67RGE0)

This was the song that got Brenda's album banned in 1990. The song is self-explanatory. Musically Brenda has been through what got called 'Bubblegum' and come out with the help of her collaborator Sello 'Chicco' Twala with a style and a personality that spanned the South African social spectrum. She caught the spirit of the time with this song and her previous hits *Weekend Special* and *Too Late for Mama*. The distance between the pop production, the synthesiser heavy, the mixed Xhosa and Soweto Zulu vocals of Brenda's work and the direction in which Congolese music has headed is quite apparent.

4. **Shikamoo Seye.** (Pépé Kallé and Empire Bakuba) Swahili Soukous. 1992. Paris: Sterns. (STCD1038)

The politest form of greeting in Tanzania is *shikamoo*, and here Pépé Kallé was reinforcing the strong relationship he had built up with the East African audience. According to Ndala Kasheba this is not a greeting that is used in Eastern Congo. This was a period when the drum machine was heavily in vogue in relentless break neck speed soukous, necessitating amazing guitar work.

5. SA **Nakupenda** 'I Love You' (Brenda Fassie) 2000. French/Swahili. CCP/EMI (CDBREN100)

Brenda's time in Hillbrow mixing with Congolese migrants had already led to the recording of a duet with Papa Wemba by the time this song was recorded. Brenda had started touring outside South Africa and rarely for a South African artist recorded this song in French and Swahili for the new audiences she was finding in the countries of South Africa's neighbours. The influence of House music established in *kwaito* conventions can be heard coming through on this recording.

The huge *kwaito* hit of this year, never since surpassed for its pan South African appeal, was *nkalakatha* by Mandoza.

6. **G.B. Gros Bébé.** (Koffi Olomide) 2001. Paris: Suave CD6942143

During the 1990s Koffi Olomide was probably the most popular Congolese act in Africa. Olomide ploughed a somewhat different furrow from his colleagues from the Paris school of dance. In the 1990s he became known all over Africa for his crooning and his love songs and a somewhat religious inflection in his singing. This changed in the new millennium as he was pulled into the gravitational field of the Wenge generation and he started producing more dance music. This song was in the more familiar mould of his hits of the 1990s when his appeal to female fans was unrivalled.

7. **Sens Unique.** 'One way' (J.B.Mpiana & Wenge Bon Chic Bon Gens). 2001. Ndombolo Lingala. Paris: Sipe 29350CD.

Like Zaiko before them Wenge have splintered to form a myriad of band with the Wenge monica - Wenge Paris, Wenge 4 x 4, Wenge Maison Mère and Wenge BCBG. It has been the sections led by Werra Son and J.B.Mpiana that have led the pack. Here is an offering from J.B.Mpiana's album Internet, in which the continued influence of the Latin connection can be heard although this is not typical of the album as a whole. By 2001 Mpiana was able to afford the trip to Paris to record. On his next album he found it was cheaper to travel to South Africa and use Gallo's Down Town Studio.

8. **Operation Dragon.** (Werra Son & Wenge Maison Mère) 2001. Lingala Ndombolo Paris: CDJPS132

Werra Son's first solo album after the break up of the Wenge Musica, like that of his new rival J.B.Mpiana, is the product of production levels not available to them in 1989 when they started out, and reflects the changes that took place in the 1990s. Frequent changes of rhythm marked by unison instrumental passages, more extensive use of keyboards placed far more carefully in the mix than in the late 1980s, overlapping spoken references to individuals and sung lead lines, interspersed with large choral parts and a prominent role for the *atalaku*. The 'Asian' melody line to finish the track reflects an interest in the East that dates back to Zaiko's first trip to Japan in 1986 and Papa Wemba's fascination with Japanese high fashion.

### DVD Notes.

The attached DVD was made by the South African Broadcasting Corporation in June 2006 using the material gathered for this research on the four generations of dance. The first band is Wendo Kolosoy's band Victoria Bakolo Miziki accompanied on the dance floor by some of their fans. The dances of the fourth generation are performed by Papa Wemba's *fioti fioti* dancers of Viva La Musica and directed by his choreographer in Kinshasa.